Vol 8 The War Illustrated N° 192

Edited by Sir John Hammerton

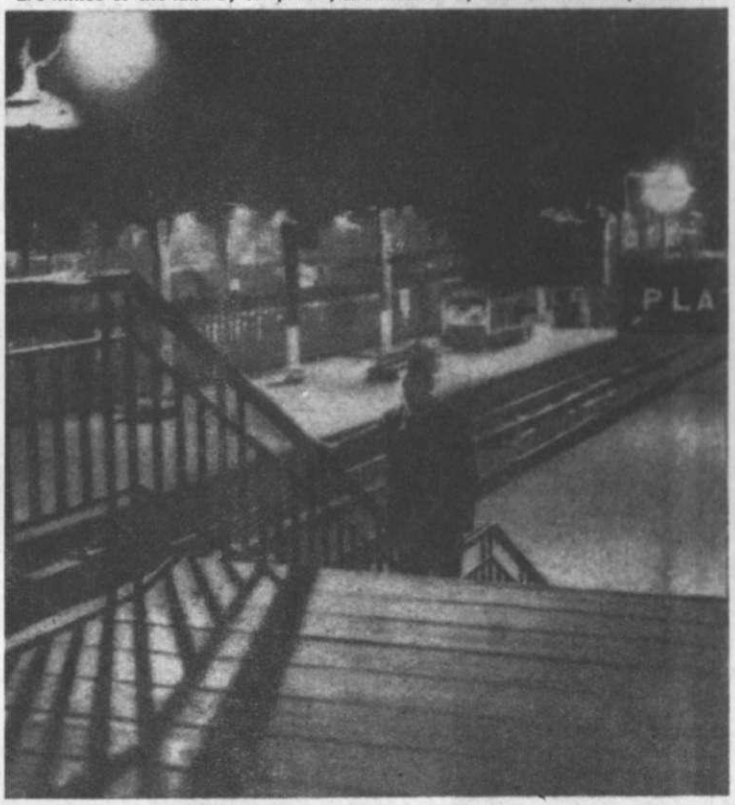
SIXPENCE OCTOBER 27, 1944

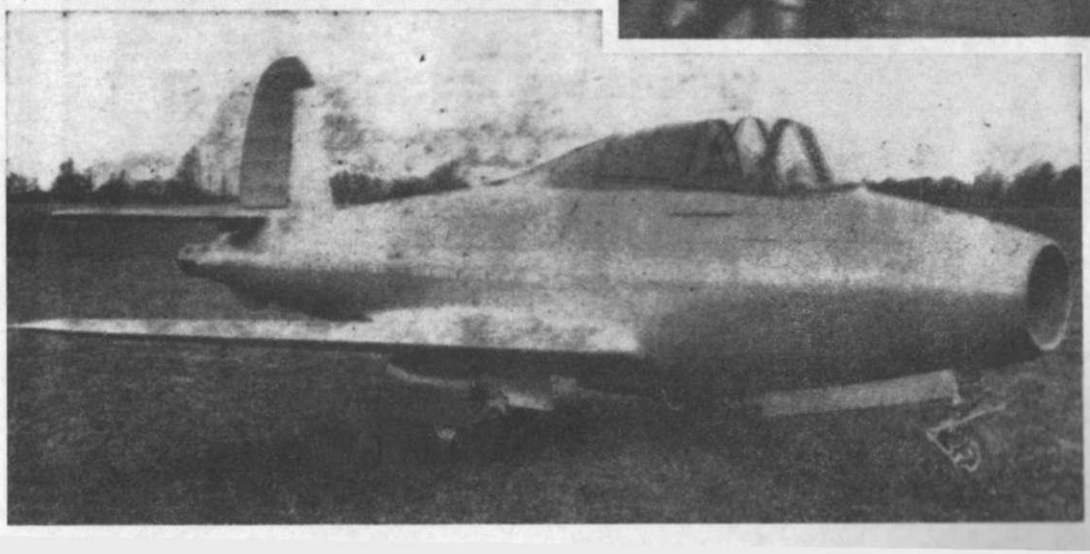
CANADIANS AT THE MENIN GATE, following the liberation of Ypres on September 7, 1944, paid their tribute to the memory of 55,000 officers and men whose names are inscribed upon the Memorial. Unveiled on July 24, 1927, the Menin Gate Memorial was erected in honour of "the Armies of the British Empire who stood here from 1914-18 and to those of their dead who have no known graves." Through the arch is seen the tower of the rebuilt Ypres Cloth Hall. *Photo, Associated Press*

Home Front-Line Tour With Our Roving Camera

SEA FORTS OF CONCRETE AND STEEL built to guard the Thames Estuary from enemy mine-laying aircraft consist of circular towers each mounted on four concrete legs rising from the river bed, and connected by bridges. Six of these grouped towers carry A.A. guns ; the seventh is a control tower. They are linked to the land by telephone, and manned by R.A. and other specialists.

DOVER'S ORDEAL ENDED with the surrender of Calais on October 1, 1944. In the area of Britain's "front-line town" 2,226 shells fell during four years' bombardment which began on August 12, 1940. Townsfolk emerged from their cave shelters to join in the celebrations of "liberation day." See also page 382.





LONDON'S mainline stations recently reverted to a pre-war lighting standard. Paddington (above) led the way on October 2, 1944, when platforms and staircases were brilliantly illuminated for the first time since the beginning of the war. The majority of the capital's termini subsequently adopted the new lighting system—estimated at five times the war-lamp strength.

BRITISH JET PLANES were used with great success against the flying bombs. Constructed by the Gloster Aircraft Co., this aircraft (left) was the first of its type to be propelled by a turbine engine jet, and was first flown in 1941. See also page 380.

Photos, British Official; Fox, Planet News, Topical Press

THE BATTLE FRONTS

by Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

THE airborne landing in Holland admittedly failed to achieve its object completely, but it accomplished enough to have made the heavy sacrifices entailed more than worth while, although inevitably the losses had in the main to be borne by one gallant division. We now know how nearly we came to complete success, and but for the weather it probably would have been achieved. Weather delayed and circumscribed the movement of the British 2nd Army's supporting force; it limited the amount of air support which could be given both to the force landed and to the 2nd Army's thrust; it was one of the reasons why the landing of the second wave of the Arnhem Division was delayed for nearly twelve hours; and it greatly interfered with the delivery of food and munitions by air (see pages 366-370).

Those were all great handicaps which could not have been foreseen, though they tend to show that even in its present state of development air power is so sensitive to weather that plans must take into consideration what course should be pursued if air co-operation relied on fails to materialize. In this case, of course, there was no alternative but to carry through plans with what co-operation could be given; but in other cases postponement or modification of plans, requiring quick decisions, may be advisable, and the decision is easier to make if the situation which has arisen has been envisaged as a possibility beforehand.

ALLIED Pressure Maintained with Utmost Intensity

The whole enterprise afforded a complete illustration of the potentialities and limitations of airborne forces which should be generally recognized. The failure at Arnhem illustrated their limitations; but equally the capture of the great Nijmegen bridge, the importance of which is immense, proved their potentialities. By no other means is it conceivable that the bridge could have been captured intact, and had it been destroyed the enemy would have been left in possession of one of the strongest defence positions on his whole front.

Since the failure at Arnhem there has been hard fighting of a localized character, induced partly by the enemy's desperate attempts to retrieve a dangerous situation and by the Allied operations to improve their position both defensively and offensively. It would, I think, be incorrect to believe that the enemy has succeeded in stabilizing the situation because no large scale offensive has been launched since the enemy began to make a determined stand. There has been only a pause, such as must always be expected when stiff opposition is at last encountered after a long advance.

It has, in fact, been surprising, considering the length of communications, the damage caused to railways by air attacks and the enemy's demolitions of port facilities, that pressure has been maintained with such intensity, and that such considerable operations as the capture of Brest, Le Havre, Boulogne and Calais have been carried through concurrently. The pause may be of considerable duration before the offensive is renewed on a maximum scale, but there is no reason to suppose it will be so prolonged as to cause its postponement till after the winter. It is obviously desirable to give the enemy no respite and there is every indication that General Eisenhower is preparing for a major effort, though at what points he may strike is, of course, his secret.

The 1st U.S. Army's attack on the Siegfried line north of Aachen, though it has considerable weight, is evidently not the big thing but rather a preliminary attack which may increase the enemy's uncertainty as to how best to dispose his reserves. I think we may be certain that when he is ready General Eisenhower will aim at achieving a complete disruption of the German front, and will be prepared to exploit success to the utmost and with little regard to seasonal conditions.

THERE is perhaps a tendency to exaggerate the necessity of suspending operations in the late autumn or winter based very largely on Passchendaele experience. The Russians have shown how much can be accomplished even in a particularly wet, unfavourable winter. Furthermore, it must be remembered that the ground surface and roads have not been cut up, as they were in the last war, by prolonged fighting and heavy military traffic, and so long as the front does not become stablized 1917 conditions will not in Norway to join the reserve, that they may also be able to withdraw their armies from the Baltic States, from the Balkans, from Italy and from Hungary and possibly also some elements from the main eastern front.

NO doubt, if all that were successfully accomplished, though it is a very wide assumption, a numerically large force might be formed. But it would certainly have to be very extensively re-equipped and reorganized, a process which would take a considerable time after the troops had reached home territory. Moreover, obviously such withdrawals would release very large Allied forces to increase the pressure on Germany's defensive fronts, now none too strongly held. It is therefore probable that a considerable part of such troops as became available would be required to reinforce them.

Apart from such considerations I do not think that the Germans, after their disastrous experience in the Kursk salient in July 1943 are at all likely to embark on another gambling counter-offensive, especially as they have acquired a healthy respect for the quality of British and American troops and their commanders. I cannot help feeling

THREE MAIN ALLIED THRUSTS were in progress on the Western Front at the beginning of October 1944. North of the Antwerp-Turnhout Canal the 1st Canadian Army linked with the British 2nd Army, while General Dempsey's troops advanced to within two miles of Arnhem. U.S. 1st Army tanks broke through the Siegfried Line north of Aachen and reached the Cologne Plain. This map shows the positions of the Allied lines on October 5. *By courtesy of The Times*

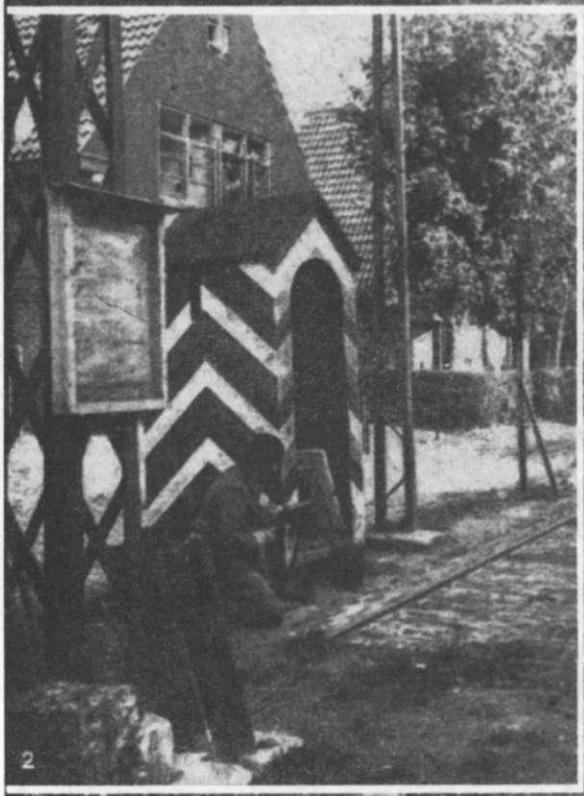
recur. Troops undoubtedly may suffer great hardships, but they are for the most part fresh and in good physical condition to withstand them. Armour could in most places operate and, with immensely better roads, maintenance of supplies should not present the difficulties encountered during the final advance in 1918, especially as mechanized transport is now immeasurably more efficient and available in vastly increased numbers.

COULD a Counter-Offensive Be Staged in the West?

On the assumption that the Germans may be able to stabilize the front and thus secure a respite, I have seen it suggested that they may still hope to stage a counter-offensive in the west when spring comes. Those who read the article in question, and did not attach sufficient weight to the writer's final conclusion that any such attempt was bound to fail, may have found the premises of his discussion somewhat alarming. To stage a counter-offensive of any weight it would obviously be necessary to build up a substantial reserve during the winter, fully organized and equipped. To support the suggestion it was therefore assumed that the Germans may succeed in withdrawing their troops from Finland, thus setting free those that the author of the suggestion was amusing himself by constructing a bogy.

I am much more impressed by the difficulties which will be encountered, should Himmler succeed in organizing ruthless partisan warfare, when the Allies, as I am convinced they will, penetrate deep into Germany. Although I do not believe that the majority of the Reichswehr, in particular its officers, would take much part in such activities yet no doubt the young fanatical elements in the S.S. formations provide particularly good material for Himmler's purpose. The success of any form of guerilla warfare, however, depends on the sympathy, and at times the active co-operation, of the ordinary population. It is possible, or even probable, that no large section of the German people would willingly give such assistance, but they would certainly be subject to terrorization if they did not. Should the situation arise it will undoubtedly have to be dealt with firmly by the occupying troops and, if possible, before the partisans are well organized and have learnt how to operate most effectively. The British Army has had considerable experience of resistance in this form, and one of the chief lessons it has learnt is the danger of not taking it seriously enough, and of not being permitted to act promptly when it is first encountered.

Sherwood Rangers Our First Troops in Germany



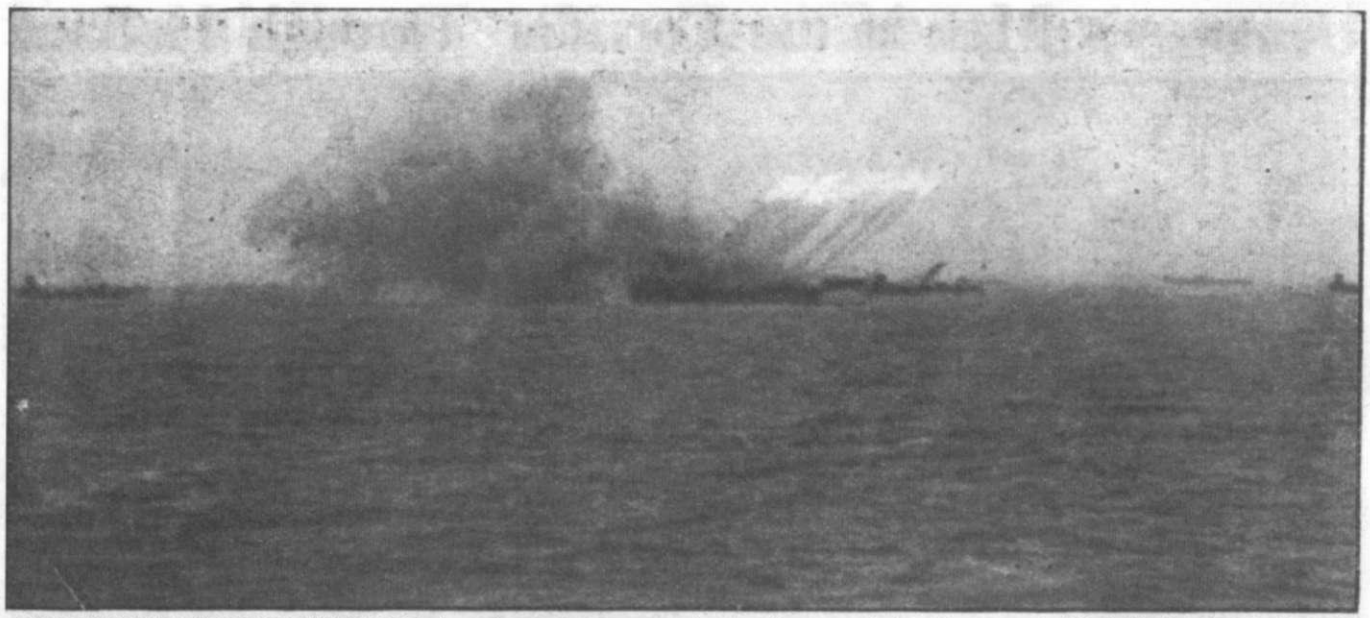
FIRST BRITISH TROOPS TO ENTER THE REICH were the Sherwood Rangers (Notts Yeomanry), a mechanised cavalry unit. On Sept. 24, 1944, they crossed the German border at the village of Beek, 4 miles S.E. of Nijmegen. Against a background of wrecked German houses a conference was held on a Sherman (1), during the arrival of Honey Recce tanks, the first of which crosses the border (4). At the frontier post (2), a Ranger is ready to cover his comrades. Dutch women greeted our men (3) at a cafe displaying the white flag.

Photos, British Official

Dempsey's Men in the Corridor Through Holland

WIDENING THE EINDHOVEN-NIJMEGEN CORRIDOR, General Dempsey's forces crossed the Bar-le-Duc canal at Someren, south-east of Eindhoven, on September 22, 1944, and three days later reached Deurne, in the direction of the German frontier. During the advance the village of Asten was captured : a 2nd Army infantryman watches one of our tanks passing down a burning street (1). Bomb-wrecked vehicles at Eindhoven (2), and on the road to Arnhem (3), testified to the effectiveness of Allied bombing.

Photos, British Official : British Newspaper Pool



ONE OF BRITAIN'S 'SECRET WEAPONS,' whose devastating fire-power has now been revealed to the enemy in full, is the Landing Craft Tank (Rocket), seen in action above. A large number of rockets can be fired in 30 seconds, and at considerable range. The effect of these rockets falling in a small area is such that the fire from one craft is roughly equivalent to the fire of 30 regiments of artillery or 30 cruisers each mounting twelve 6-in. guns, when related to the time over which the bombardment takes place. *Photo, Canadian Official*

THE WAR AT SEA

by Francis E. McMurtrie

In a recent speech Mr. Churchill referred to "a further measure of modernization and tropicalization" which our battleships have undergone in readiness for service in the Far East. This process of modernization is believed to have included: (a) the fitting of the latest type of radar (radio-location gear); (b) the mounting of much additional armament.

Similar extensions of armament and other equipment have been effected in H.M. ships of almost every category. Apart from such major improvements, concerned mainly with the fighting efficiency of our warships, various minor alterations have been made which affect living conditions in cabins and on the mess decks. This war has driven home the lesson that the well-being of Service personnel must be looked after if the best results are to be secured; and in a broadcast at the end of last month Admiral Sir James Somerville referred feelingly to the discomforts which are, unfortunately, inseparable from tropical warfare.

In addition to its responsibility for radar, radio and other "gadgets," the Royal Naval Scientific Service (the establishment of which was described in page 294) is closely concerned in the improvement of living conditions afloat. Control of humidity and additional ventilation are two of the chief aims. In "darkening ship"—the naval equivalent of the black-out—difficulties are aggravated. A man who feels a draught on turning into his hammock is very apt to put his sock into the ventilator. Indirect control of ventilation is the solution for this sort of difficulty.

For the benefit of men working under tropical conditions in a closed compartment, such as a wireless cabinet, it is covered in special material which does not absorb the sun's rays. In the Arctic the object instead is to keep people warm. Certain ships have been specially designed for service in high latitudes, but in others it has been necessary to insulate living accommodation to maintain a habitable temperature.

Not only habitability, but the problem of making it easier for men to perform mechanical operations of every kind is engaging the attention of the R.N.S.S. All points in the design of mechanism are watched carefully, and the positions of starting handles, switches, etc., arranged so that they can be got at easily. Power aid is brought in wherever necessary to enable a man to do things without the exertion of undue force. This, of course, is not a novel idea; it is embodied in the steering engine, and is encountered ashore in the use of electricity to assist the operation of levers in railway signal boxes and of points at a rail crossing. In the Royal Navy a wide field for such improvements has been found. Results have been gratifying, proving that to enable a man to do his job in greater comfort is to add to his efficiency.

SOVIET Submarine Successes Against German Transports

What has become of the German fleet in the Baltic? According to Swedish reports little has been seen of it for some considerable time, beyond fleeting glimpses of a couple of ships, believed to be the 10,000-ton cruisers Prinz Eugen and Admiral Hipper. Yet, excluding the dismantled battleship Gneisenau, the aircraft carrier Graf Zeppelin and the cruiser Seydlitz, both incomplete, there are believed to be eight other warships of importance in German Baltic ports. These are the "pocket battleships" Lützow and Admiral Scheer, the coast defence ships Schlesien and Schleswig-Holstein, and the cruisers Nürnberg, Leipzig, Köln and Emden.

It is extraordinary that more use has not been made of these ships in resisting the Russian advance through Estonia and Latvia. Quite a number of enemy transports—certainly not less than six, and probably over a dozen—seem to have been sunk or obliged to beach themselves as the result of persistent attacks by Soviet submarines, motor-torpedo-boats and aircraft. No attempt appears to have been made to provide escorts of sufficient strength to withstand these attacks.

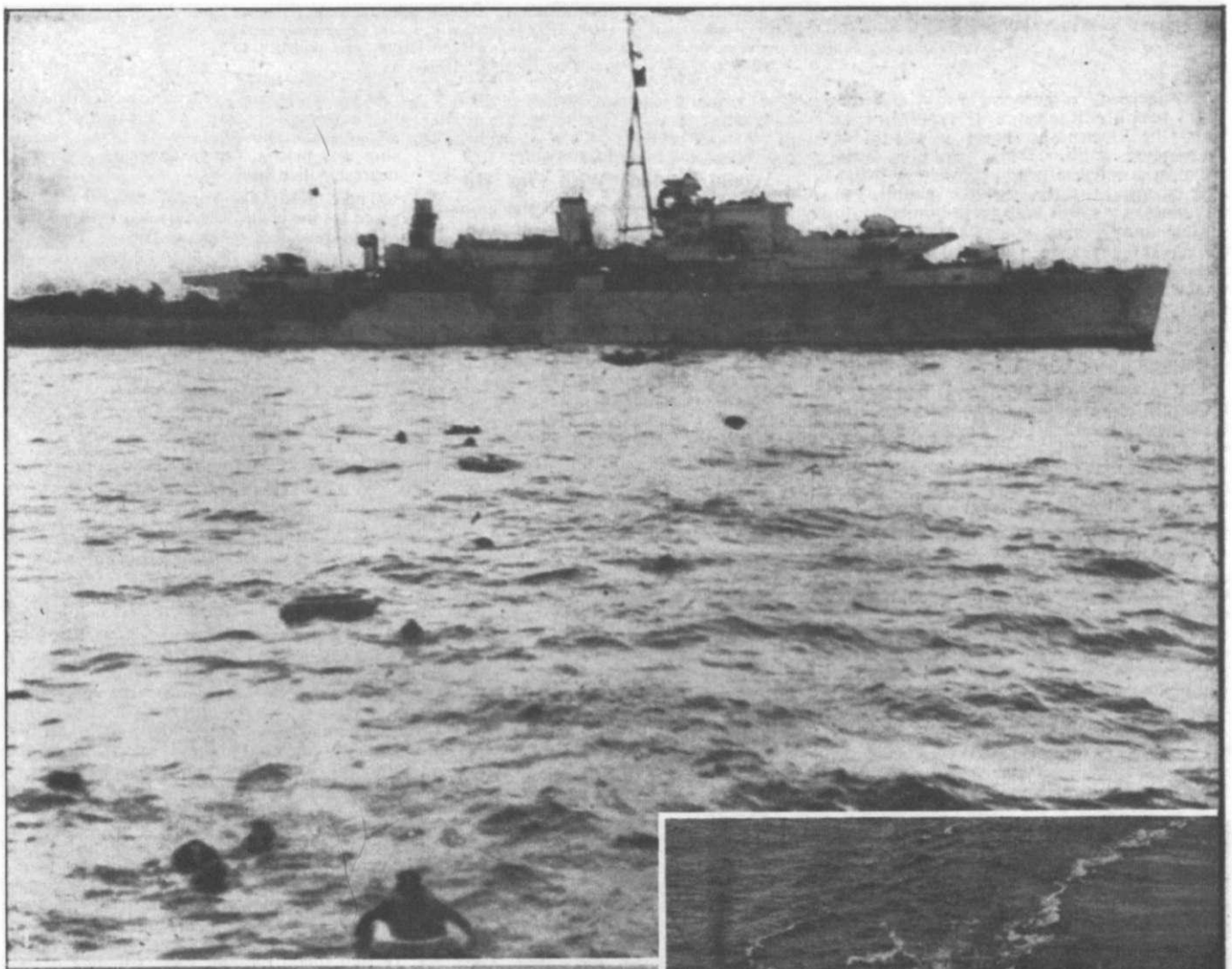
Nor does the German Navy seem to have figured in the struggle to retain the important islands at the mouth of the Gulf of Riga—Oesel, Dagö, etc. With these islands in their possession, the Russians have not only isolated Riga but have obtained complete control of the approaches to the Gulf of Finland, from which their fleet is now free to emerge. Its exact composition is doubtful, but Swedish sources consider that the old battleship Oktiabrskaya Revolutia and two heavy cruisers (one of them the ex-German Petropavlovsk) are certainly in seaworthy condition. Materials may not have been available for completion of repairs to the old battleship Marat.

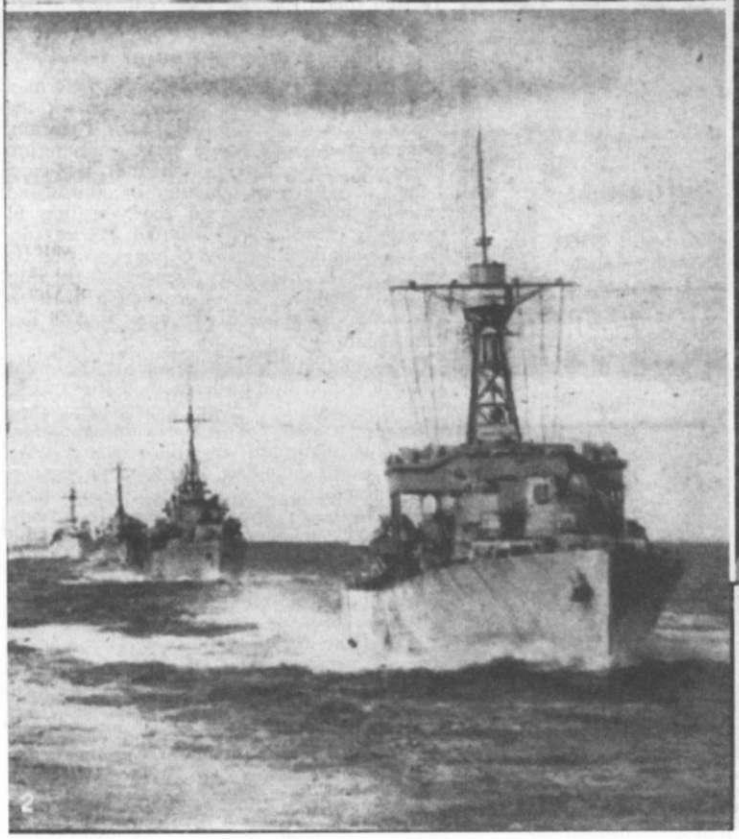
Evidently the Russians felt sufficiently confident of German impotence at sea, to ignore the risk involved in landing troops in the Aland Islands, the strategic value of which had given rise to earlier reports of a German garrison having been installed there. There are at least three possible explanations of the absence of the German fleet from the scene of such important operations. One is that it has been resolved to husband all remaining naval resources for the defence of purely German territories such as East Prussia and Pomerania, now in imminent danger. Another is that reserves of naval personnel have been depleted by drafts made to man the defences of the Eastern and Western fronts, threatened by the advancing Allied armies. A third is that the vast number of mines laid in enemy waters in the Baltic by the Royal Air Force has caused the disablement of the majority of German heavy warships just when their services are most urgently needed. It may be that the truth will be found to include elements of all three explanations.

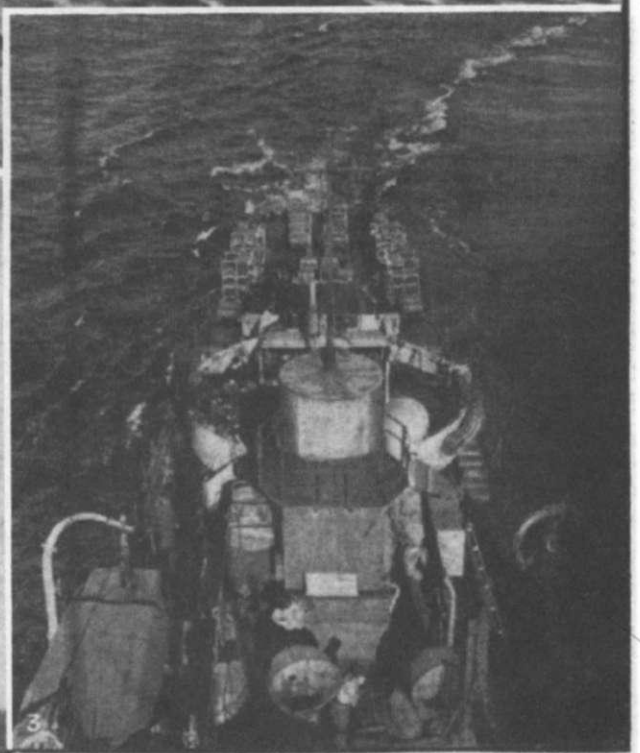
GREEK Islands Reoccupied by R.N. Landing Parties

In the Aegean the Royal Navy has recently been busy cutting the last lines of communication between the German-held islands and the mainland of Greece. Samos, Levitha and Cythera were amongst the first islands to be reoccupied, generally by landing parties from H.M. ships, who were later replaced by military detachments. Of late every vessel attempting to run the blockade with German evacuees has been intercepted and sunk, so that the enemy have had to fall back on their scanty supply of troop-carrying aircraft as a means of escape. Crete and Rhodes are the principal islands still in German hands, but their surrender has now become inevitable. The Navy has also been busy covering landings in the Peloponnesus, in Albania and on the Yugoslav islands that fringe the Dalmatian coast.

2nd Escort Group Raise U-Boat Toll to 500







FORMIDABLE U-BOAT HUNTERS, the 2nd Escort Group—composed of frigates and sloops (see pages 710-11, Vol. 7), and already holding a remarkable record for enemy submarine sinkings—recently returned home from another hazardous patrol. They had added three more to their total of kills. Ships of this famous Group included H.M.S. Loch Fada, Wren, Dominica and Loch Killin, seen during patrol (2) from the sloop Starling. The Wren (1) photographed from the Starling, stands by to rescue German survivors struggling in the water after their U-boat had been destroyed. Looking down at the Starling's impressive array of depth charges, ready for possible action (3). On August 9, 1944, it was announced that the total number of U-boats sunk during the war to that date exceeded 500. *Photos, British Official*

Dodging Destruction With Cargoes of Death

That on the many far-flung battle fronts our fighting men have not gone short of ammunition is due in large measure to the "powder ships." HOWARD JOHNS writes here of hair's-breadth escapes of indomitable men who serve aboard these vessels and by their labours and skill help to keep well fed the ever hungry Allied guns.

For security reasons the world is rarely told of the great work performed by the men who serve aboard the ammunition ships. These vessels, among the most coveted targets for enemy U-boats, have scores of times run the gauntlet of torpedoes, mines, and dive-bombers to sustain our armies and far-flung naval forces, yet the men who make up their crews take all this danger for granted. "I wanted to serve aboard an ammunition ship because my father, and grandfather, did in the last war," one young seaman said to me. "And, anyway, I do feel I'm doing something worth while."

The German Navy, and possibly the Luftwaffe, have in the past offered a bonus to anyone sinking an ammunition ship, so every time they leave port for the high seas these vessels know they are number one priority so far as enemy U-boats, or long-range bombers, are concerned.

In the main, Britain's fleet of powder ships has developed over the war years, although in 1939 there were several craft that had been specially constructed for this ever-dangerous task. They had blast-proof steel bulkheads, thousands of automatic sprinklers which could flood any part of the vessel in case of fire, steel curtains to isolate the flames, and special arrangements aboard for jettisoning burning cargo.

As our war effort grew it was realized that the time taken to build such craft could not be spared, so merchantmen were re-built and transformed into "powder ships." Our armies, and navies, as well as the R.A.F., have never gone short of ammunition, thanks in no small measure to the dare-devils who serve aboard the ammunition ships.

Would Explode With One Hit

When Malta was blockaded one ammunition ship, at great risk, ran through the Sicilian Narrows with a cargo of T.N.T. destined for the defenders of the Island. When she was half-way to Malta a German aircraft swooped low—and every man aboard the ammunition ship prepared to defend the vessel. It is a wise old saying among men of the powder ships: "Fight if you have to. Run if you can." After all, there is no sense fighting aboard a vessel that would explode with one hit! If you can get your cargo through, do so. These crews, however, love a fight, and when this particular plane began to shadow them, more than one gunner longed to send a shell into the blue heavens—but the skipper decided to wait.

For several hours the machine remained overhead; then, when its petrol must have been running low, another enemy machine appeared and took over the duty of shadowing the powder ship. Then, straight ahead, an enemy convoy appeared, obviously running across supplies to Rommel. Everyone aboard expected trouble, but kept cool, and the lone vessel steamed clean through the middle of the Axis convoy!

Shortly afterwards a British fighter appeared in the sky, engaged the German, and shot him into the sea. Then, in a menacing manner, the Spitfire turned towards the ammunition ship. A hurriedly flashed signal made the pilot aware that a British ship was below, and he escorted her to the nearest Allied port.

There the strange story of the "protection" given by the enemy aircraft was told, and the reason revealed. Apparently the Luftwaffe had been told to escort an Italian vessel to a North African port. Before they could link up with it, however, the Navy had captured the Italian ship, and the Germans had mistaken the British powder ship for the Italian! Anyway, by keeping cool the Britishers ran through an Axis convoy, avoided German fighter cannon shells, and managed to get through to Malta with a most valuable cargo.

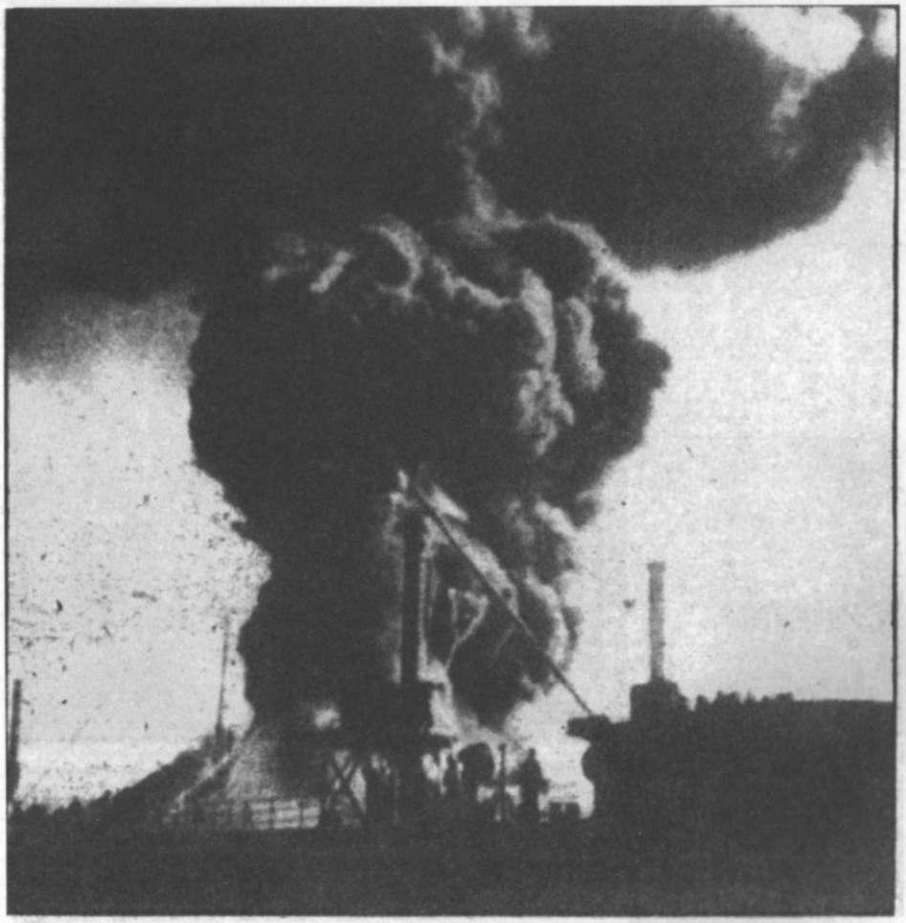
Sometimes these vessels have not been so fortunate. On one occasion—again in the Mediterranean—a powder ship, that had been developed from a captured Italian schooner, was attacked by a Heinkel. The gunners, in great form, shot down the plane, but before he made his death-dive the pilot signalled the ammunition vessel's position to an Italian patrol ship. Soon she was attacking the British craft, who replied with her small 12-mm. gun. But it was a hopeless fight, and when the powder ship, destined for Tobruk, was fired amidships, the captain ordered his crew to climb into the lifeboat. They did not want to do this—but orders are orders! Then, when the Italian patrol ship drew close to the schooner the British captain turned towards her, and drove his flaming vessel at the enemy craft. There were shouts of alarm from the Italians as the schooner bore down upon them. Then, when it had reached the Axis craft, the flames reached the T.N.T. There was a terrific explosion. The Mediterranean, over a vast area, appeared to "jump." When the smoke cleared, shattered wood and twisted metal were all that remained of the powder ship and her gallant skipper.

Aflame With a Cargo of T.N.T.

On the Russian convoys the German U-boats and planes appeared to mark the ammunition ships out for special attention. During one hectic trip a large ammunition ship was bombed so often that the crew began to take it as a matter of course and thought it strange when the whistling of bombs was not to be heard! Twice torpedoes, aimed at her by U-boats, missed by inches and struck other vessels. But the ship with its precious cargo reached a Russian port, every member of the crew shaken but triumphant.

They had just settled down for the night when German bombers resumed the attack, and fire-bombs, hitting the deck, went through to the T.N.T. Although they knew the chances of coming out alive were slight, every member of the crew rushed to the threatened area and fought the flames, while German bombers, winging their way overhead, concentrated on the flaming target. And those seamen again defeated the enemy. Although many were badly burnt, they beat out the flames, then, in the darkness, took as much as possible of the T.N.T. from the vessel.

Ammunition ships, as I said earlier, are the vessels the Army and Navy rely upon to feed the guns, and it takes time to train men to handle such a delicate cargo. The enemy knows this; that is why the order was issued "Always go for ammunition ships." But it takes more than orders by the enemy to defeat men of this breed.



FIRE-BOMBS RAINED DOWN and set this ammunition ship ablaze. Dodging the flames, and well-nigh smoke-choked, the trained and war-hardened crew have no immediate thought for themselves. Their first duty is to prevent the conflagration reaching the munitions in the holds; at all costs a cargo of this nature must be delivered. *Photo, Krystone*

Canada Mounts Guard at Calais Headquarters

CALAIS FELL TO THE 1st CANADIAN ARMY after a combined air and artillery attack on October 1, 1944. Over 7,000 prisoners were taken as the German garrison left their blazing strong-points; among them was their commander, Colonel Schoerner. Before the final assault was made that brought enemy resistance to an end, a 24-hour truce enabled some 20,000 French civilians to leave. In the town itself the entrance to the former headquarters of the once-triumphant Wehrmacht was guarded by this Canadian rifleman.

Photo, Associated Press

Dutch Fight Their Way Home With the Allies

ADVANCING INTO HOLLAND with the Allied forces in September 1944, men of the Princess Irene Brigade (the Royal Netherlands Army) returned to their country as liberators after four years of exile. Maastricht, one of the first Dutch towns to be freed, welcomed the homecomers on September 14. A Boy Scout was among the crowd to greet Prince Bernhard as the latter drove in a jeep to the Town Hall (1).

Named after the second daughter of Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard, the Princess Irene Brigade, composed of Dutch troops trained in Canada and Britain, achieved a fine record in Normandy; Cromwell tanks belonging to this brigade pause in a Belgian village en route for the Dutch frontier (2). Children waved to the lorries as a convoy set off (3). A corporal of the Dutch Marines (4), and a 6-pounder anti-tank gun with a Bren-gunner in position in a wood (5).

Photos, British Official; Pictorial Press

Battle-Trained Postmen Handle Front Line Mail

Under the leadership of Brigadier Lane, Director of Army Postal Services, the Army Post Office functions magnificently, striving through enemy fire, rain, wind and tides to get letters from home to our fighting men. Postmen parachuted into Normandy on D-Day; and in other campaigns they have performed difficult duties in praiseworthy fashion, as told by KEITH COOPER.

THE men of the Army Post Office belong to the Royal Engineers, and for the most part were employed in the General Post Office before the war. They perform highly-skilled duties, but before engaging in that work they have to undergo the battle courses and specialized training of a fighting man.

The day following our landing in France people in Britain received letters from Normandy. The majority wondered how such a service was possible; the answer is the smooth working of long-term plans drawn up by the Army Postal Services. The Army Council, realizing the great morale-booster they have in a well-organized communications system with hearth and home in Britain, went to infinite trouble to make sure that the Army's postmen were given the best possible facilities; and the postmen were determined to give of their best.

When the initial airborne landings were made in France men of the Army Postal Services were among the first to parachute to earth. Their sorting frames, and other essentials for their work, were also parachuted, in specially-constructed containers. Aboard the gliders men of the Army's own post office, together with their gear, touched down deep in France on D-Day, while others of the same unit were among the first to set foot on the beaches. In shell-craters, often with the battle close at hand, these men went about their work. And rare was it that even enemy action prevented them from continuing their difficult task of sorting the mail.

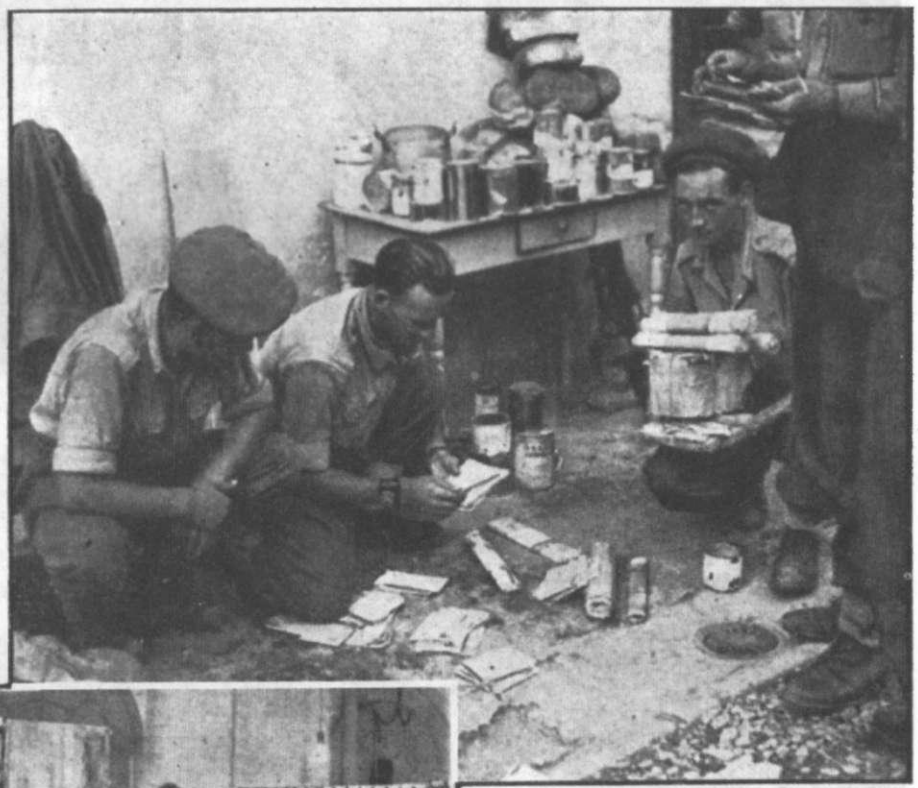
THEY have to take advantage of the shipping available, every load being taken to its destination by a courier detailed by the Army Postal Services. In this connexion it helps considerably if people keep down the weight of their letters, writing on both sides of the paper—and correctly address them. An average of 9,000 letters a day are incorrectly addressed, resulting in confusion and delay.

Over a thousand A.T.S. are today performing valuable sorting work at the home postal centres through which mail for overseas passes, and it speaks well of their skill that men who in civilian life were experienced postal workers have given them high credit for a job well done. These women greatly aid the ever-expanding postal service of the British Army, and play an important role in making sure that mail is on time.

ON the Western front the Army Postal Services are developing a routine service and it is hoped before long to establish one similar to that organized when the B.E.F. was in France. After the A.P.S. left France in 1940, and there was little work for them to do as the British Army overseas was small, most of these postmen were among the few well-armed soldiers who defended our coasts against the possibility of a German invasion—a fact not generally known outside Army circles.

In Crete and in North Africa they took part in some of the fiercest fighting of the war. Their battle training stood them in good stead every time, for although their chief function is, of course, tending the mail, like other units of the Royal Engineers they can be relied upon to perform any duty with satisfaction and relish.

On one occasion, in North Africa, a battery of the Royal Artillery desired to take over a spot used by the Army Postal Services. The latter's C.O. explained that it was quite impossible for them to remove their gear immediately, but said they had no objection to the gunners sharing the site. This was agreed upon. But the first blast from the guns blew all the letters from the sorting racks; so the postmen battened down the letters with weights, and then helped to bring up ammunition! For two days they assisted the battery, resuming their own duties when the gunners moved forward.



TWO-AND-A-HALF MILLION LETTERS every week were handled by an Army Postal Depot in the Midlands. Members of the A.T.S. (above) sort parcels and other postal matter. A kerbstone "sorting office" (top) was organized as a temporary measure by a regimental sergeant-major after the British 8th Army entered Florence on August 12, 1944; sorting racks—and a roof—and other refinements came later.

THE letters for men in forward areas go up to the line with orderlies sent down to collect the rations. The Germans appear to take a great delight in trying to snatch these mail bags from our men, and on at least one occasion a bag, in no man's land, has been under fire for eight hours, after it had been dropped by an orderly running for cover. Eventually a daring sergeant dashed out and recovered it.

In the Field the Army Postal Services, night and day, are performing feats of hard work that rarely appear in the news. Getting a good flow of mail through to the men at the front means not only fighting the enemy, but tides, wind, rain and bad fortune. The success of these endeavours is reflected in the satisfied state of mind of the fighting men who regularly get their letters from home.

Photos, British Official; Keystone

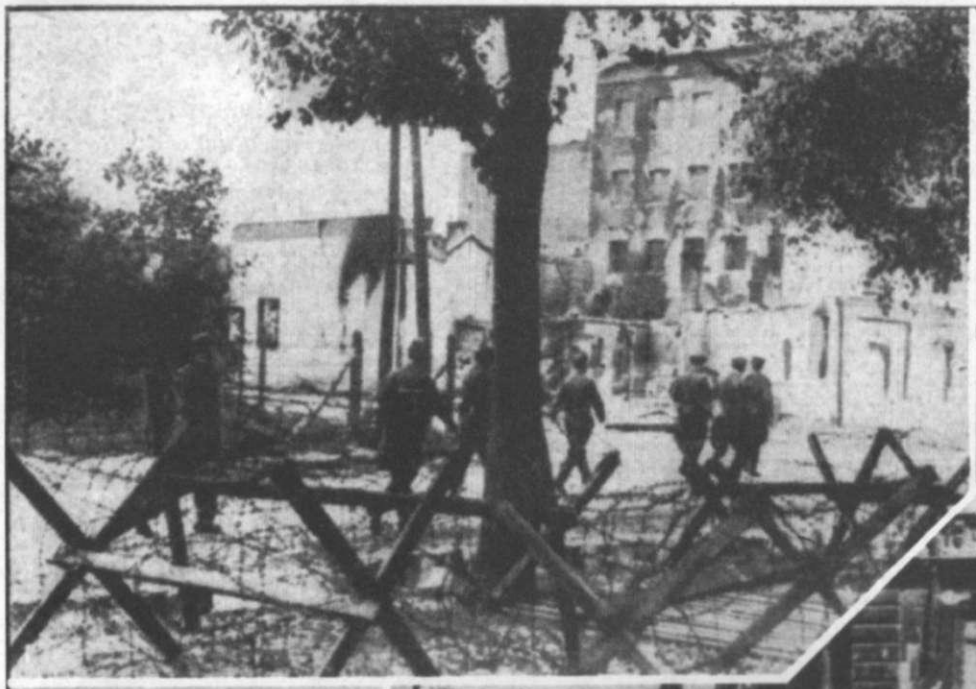
Red Army Triumphant in Estonia and Bulgaria

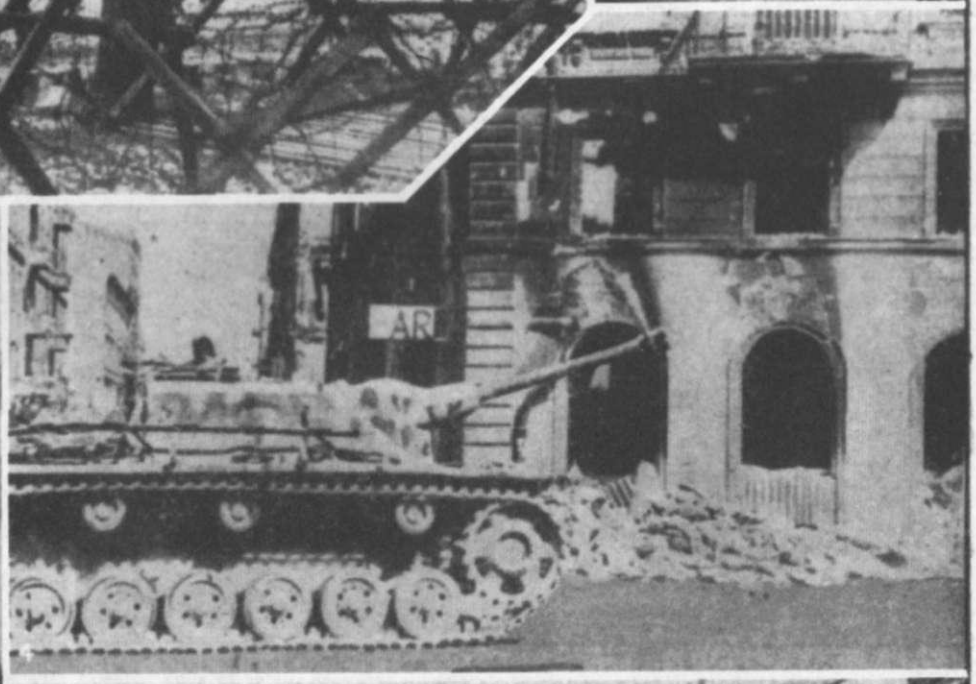
TALLINN, CAPITAL OF ESTONIA, fell to the Russians on Sept. 22, 1944, after a spectacular 50-mile dash along the shores of the Gulf of Finland by Marshal Govorov's tanks and assault infantry. The capture of this important naval base deprived the Germans of a valuable escape port. By October 10 the whole of the Estonian mainland had been liberated and the Russians had landed on Oesel, last outlying island, and were mopping-up remnants of German resistance there. Citizens of Tallinn are seen greeting the Red Army in one of the city's squares.

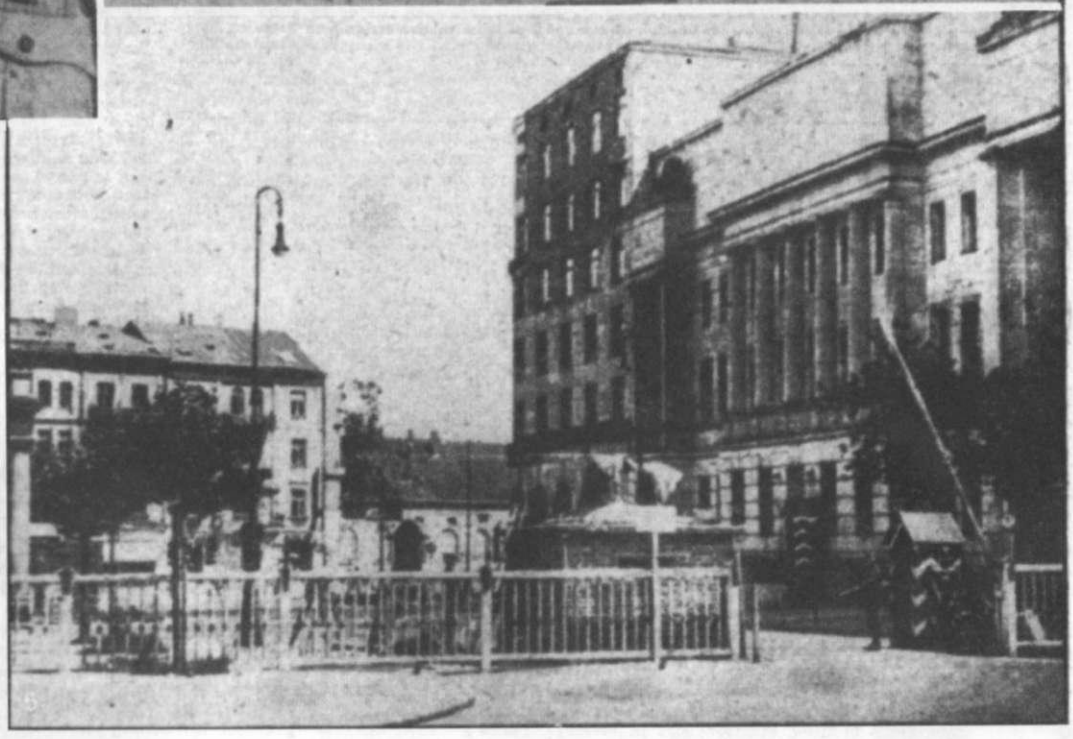
VARNA, BULGARIAN PORT ON THE BLACK SEA, was occupied by Soviet forces on September 8, 1944, after they had driven south into Bulgaria from the Rumanian border. Taken without opposition, Varna played an important part after 1941 as a base from which the German-Bulgarian attacks were launched against the Red Army. Troops of the 3rd Ukrainian Front collaborated with the Soviet Black Sea Fleet in capturing the port. Russian motor patrol boats are seen entering the harbour.

Photos, Pictorial Press

The Tragic End of Polish Resistance in Warsaw







BATTLE OF WARSAW which began on August 1, 1944, when the Red Army's summer offensive had advanced almost to the outskirts of the Polish capital, ended in tragic capitulation by the besieged Poles on October 2. Lieut.-Gen. Komorowski (Gen. "Bor"), C.-in-C. Polish Home Army, stated in his final message to the Polish Government in London that "Warsaw has fallen, exhausted and without means to carry on the fight."

The capital suffered great devastation, as shown in the photograph of the wrecked street along which a heavy German tank plunges (4). Enemy troops easily penetrated barbed wire defences—according to this German photograph (1) taken on August 31. Bitter fighting raged in Warsaw's main thoroughfares: the German H.Q. in Pilsudski Square (5). Two R.A.F. men were honoured for the part they played in dropping supplies to the Polish Patriots: Fo J. D. Johnston (2) received the D.F.C., and Wo A. Toft (3) the D.F.M.

Photos, British Official: 'Keystone', Planet News

Immortal Story of the Airborne Men of Arnhem

For nine days in September 1944 men of Britain's airborne forces battled against huge odds to hold ground they had gained at Arnhem in Holland: an exploit intended to open a gateway to North-West Germany. Something of "this glorious and fruitful operation," as Mr. Churchill described it, is told below. See also pages 348 and 367-370.

"OUR task," said Major-General Urquhart, C.B., D.S.O. and bar, Commander of the 1st Airborne Division of the British Army, "was to secure the Arnhem Bridge if we could, and anyhow secure a bridge-head north of the River Lek. We hoped that the 2nd Army would be with us within 24 hours. That was the most optimistic estimate. We ourselves thought we might possibly have to hold 3 or 4 days" . . . They were there for nine bitter days. "Eventually we held a perimeter 900 yards broad and 1,200 yards in depth."

Had it been possible to get a complete airborne division down in one lift the outcome might have been very different; but it was not possible. And because of flak the R.A.F. was unable to land the airborne forces nearer than 8 miles of Arnhem town. Moreover, stronger and earlier opposition than was expected was encountered. But at the end of the first day one battalion of the division was on the bridge and the rest of the division was on the town's outskirts. The battalion removed the explosive charges and the Arnhem Bridge was ready to be crossed by the 2nd Army advancing north.

GERMAN TRIBUTE TO THE MEN OF ARNHEM

They are certainly hardy fellows, the pick of the bunch, to whom the British Command entrusted the difficult operations at Arnhem. They are of all sorts and professions, age and origin—blacksmiths, bus conductors and students. There are men from London, Wales, Scotland and Canada.

When they are captured they smile, and if they are wounded they hide their pain. The paratroopers have already been driven from the bridge where they landed and held their first positions. But they fight on stubbornly.—*By a war reporter over the German radio, on September 27, 1944.*

MAJOR-GEN. R. E. URQUHART, C.B., D.S.O. and bar (extreme right), commander of the British 1st Airborne Division that fought at Arnhem, returned to England on Sept. 29, 1944. He landed at an airfield in the Midlands in a U.S. troop-carrying plane and is here seen talking to glider pilots who accompanied him on his homeward journey. He was invested with the insignia of Commander of the Bath by H.M. the King at Buckingham Palace on October 9. *Photo, G.P.U.*

But though they could not "make it," the 2nd Army was able to complete the capture of the vital Nijmegen Bridge, to the south: the airborne men's gallant stand at Arnhem locking up German forces which otherwise would have been thrown into the Nijmegen battle. Approximately 8,000 men were dropped in the Arnhem area, those engaged in the great battle including glider-borne troops of the South Staffordshire Regt., the King's Own Scottish Borderers, and the Border Regt.; and men of the Dorsetshire Regt. and Polish parachute troops reinforced the Division.

"We decided on evacuation," said Maj.-Gen. Urquhart, "when it was clear we could not last another 24 hours. Our exit by two roads to the river came off better than I dared to hope." When the withdrawal of some 2,000 survivors from this bridge-head, which had become a trap when bad weather prevented adequate airborne reinforcements being dropped, had been successfully completed, Maj.-Gen. Urquhart received from Field-Marshal Montgomery this message:

"I want to express to you personally, and to every officer and man in your Division, my appreciation of what you all did at Arnhem for the Allied cause . . . In years to come it will be a great thing for a man to be able to say, 'I fought at Arnhem.'"

The story of the evacuation, by Stanley Maxted, from which the following is condensed, makes solemn yet thrilling reading:

About five kilometres to the west of Arnhem on that last day (September 25) I saw the dead and the living—those who fought a good fight and kept the faith with you at home, and those who still fought magnificently on. They were the last of the few. I last saw them yesterday morning as they dribbled into Nijmegen. They had staggered and walked and waded all night from Arnhem about ten miles north, and we were busy asking each other if this or that one had been seen. I walked up to one young lieutenant to ask him about his sergeant—a stout lad if there ever was one—and he started to explain what had happened and then turned away. Remember, all of those men have been practically ten days and nights under the most murderous concentrated fire I have seen in two wars. Then he turned again and said: "It's hell to be pulled out when you haven't finished your job isn't it?"

THAT'S the way they all felt. It doesn't occur to them that if they hadn't held that horde of enemy at Arnhem, that force would have been down at Nijmegen upsetting the whole applecart. That was yesterday morning. Late on the afternoon before, we were told that the remnants of the 1st Airborne Division were going to pull out that night. The enemy was making it impossible for the elements of the 2nd Army to relieve us. We were told to destroy all our equipment with the exception of what would go into one haversack. We were told to muffle our boots with bits of blanket and be ready to move off at a certain time. When the various officers were told to transmit this news to that thin straggle of hard-pressed men around the pitifully small perimeter, a great silence seemed to come upon them even in the middle of the shelling. The ones I saw just drew a deep breath and said: "Very good, sir." Then they faded away to crawl out on their stomachs and tell their men.

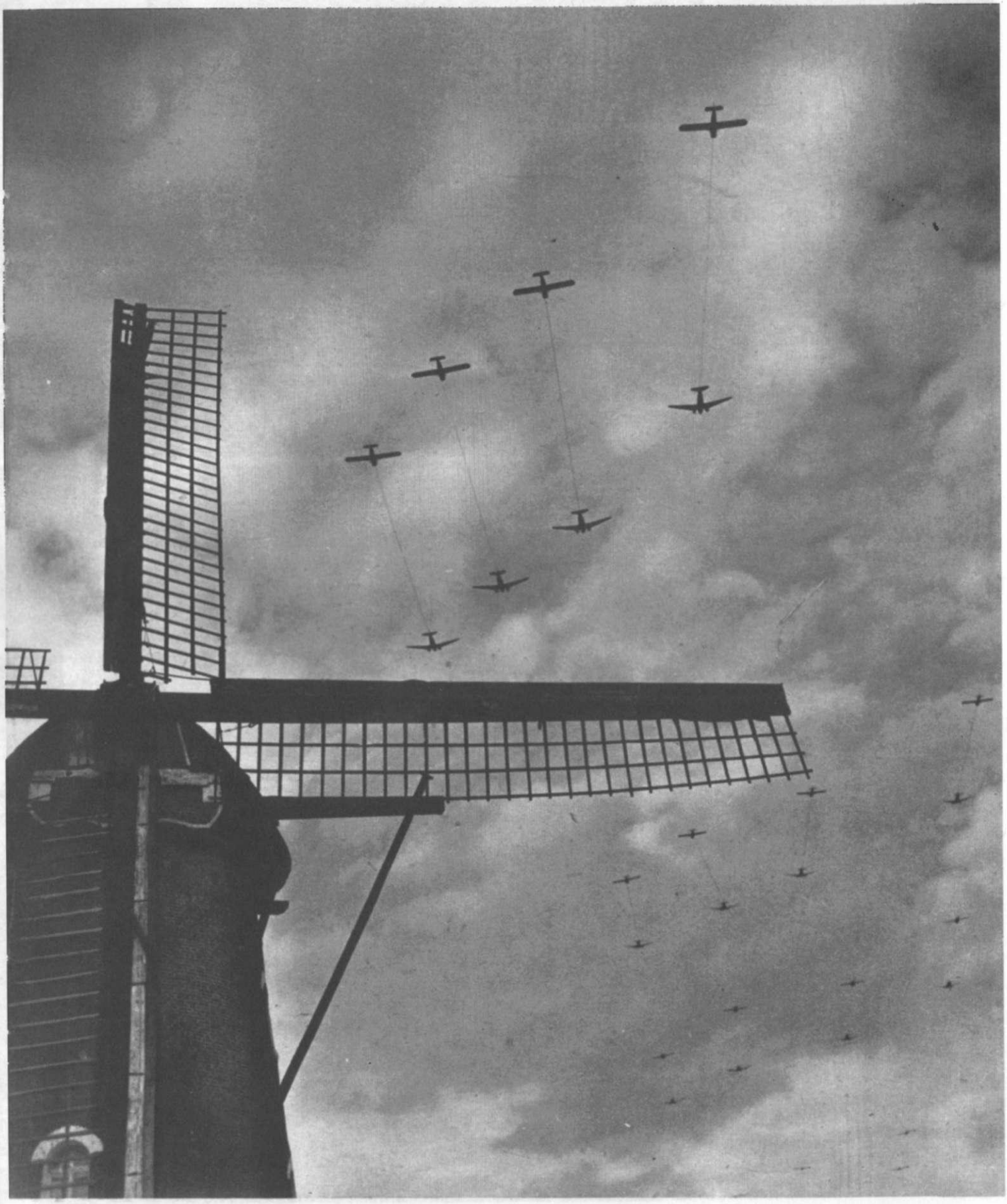
Perhaps I should remind you here that these were men of no ordinary calibre. They had been in that little space mortared and shelled, machine-gunned and sniped from all around. When a tank or a self-propelled 88 gun broke through, two or three of them detached themselves and somehow or another put it out of business. For the last three days they had had no water, very little small arms ammunition, and rations cut to one-sixth. Luckily, or unluckily, it rained, and they caught the water in their capes and drank that. These last items were never mentioned—they were airborne, weren't they? They were tough and knew it.

Well, at two minutes past ten we clambered out of our slit trenches in an absolute din of bombardment, a great deal of it our own, and formed up in a single line. We held the tail of the coat of the man in front, and set off like a file of nebulous ghosts from our pock-marked and tree-strewn piece of ground. Obviously, since the enemy was all round us, we had to go through him to get to the River Rhine. After about two hundred yards of silent trekking we knew we were among the enemy. It was difficult not to throw yourself flat when machine-gun tracers skimmed your head or the scream of a shell or mortar-bomb sounded very close. But the orders were to keep going.

THE back of my neck was prickling for all that interminable march. I couldn't see the man ahead of me—all I knew was that I had hold of a coat-tail, and for the first time in my life was grateful for the downpour of rain that made a patter on the leaves of the trees and covered up any little noises we were making. At every turn of the way there was posted a sergeant glider-pilot, who stepped out like a shadow and then stepped back into a deeper shadow again.

As we came out of the trees I felt as naked as if I were in Piccadilly Circus in my pyjamas, because of the glow from fires across the river. The machine-gun and general bombardment had never let-up. Verey lights were going up over us. We lay down flat in the mud and rain and stayed that way for two hours till the sentry beyond the hedge on the bank of the river told us to move up over the dyke and be taken across. After what seemed a nightmare of an age we got our turn and slithered up and over on to some mud flats. There was the shadow of a little assault craft with an outboard motor on it. Several of these had been rushed up by a field company of engineers. One or two of them were out of action already. I waded out into the Rhine up to my hips; it didn't matter, for I was soaked through long ago—had been for days. A voice that was sheer music spoke from the stern of the boat saying: "Ye'll have to step lively, boys, it ain't healthy here." It was a Canadian voice, and the engineers were Canadian engineers.

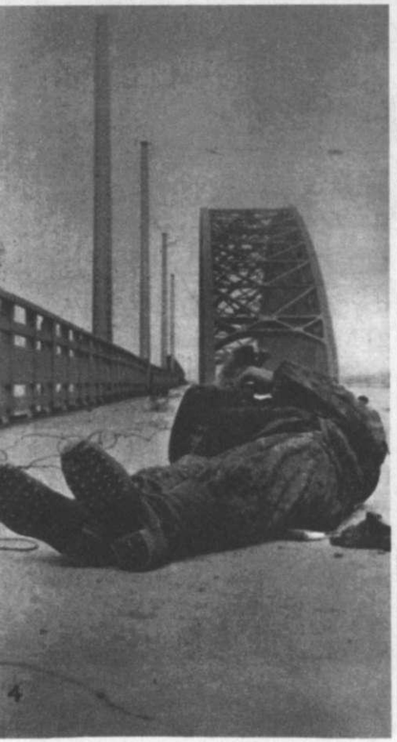
We helped push the boat off into the swift Rhine current and with our heads down between our knees waited for the bump on the far side—or for what might come before. It didn't come. We clambered out and followed what had been a white tape up over a dyke. We slid down the other side on our backsides, we sloshed through mud for four miles and a half, me thinking, "Gosh! I'm alive! How did it happen?" In a barn there was a blessed hot mug of tea with rum in it, and a blanket over our shoulders, and then we walked again all night. After daylight we got to a dressing station near Nijmegen. Then we were put in trucks, and that's how we reached Nijmegen. That's how the last of the few got out to go and fight in some future battle. No matter what battle that is, I know they won't let you down.

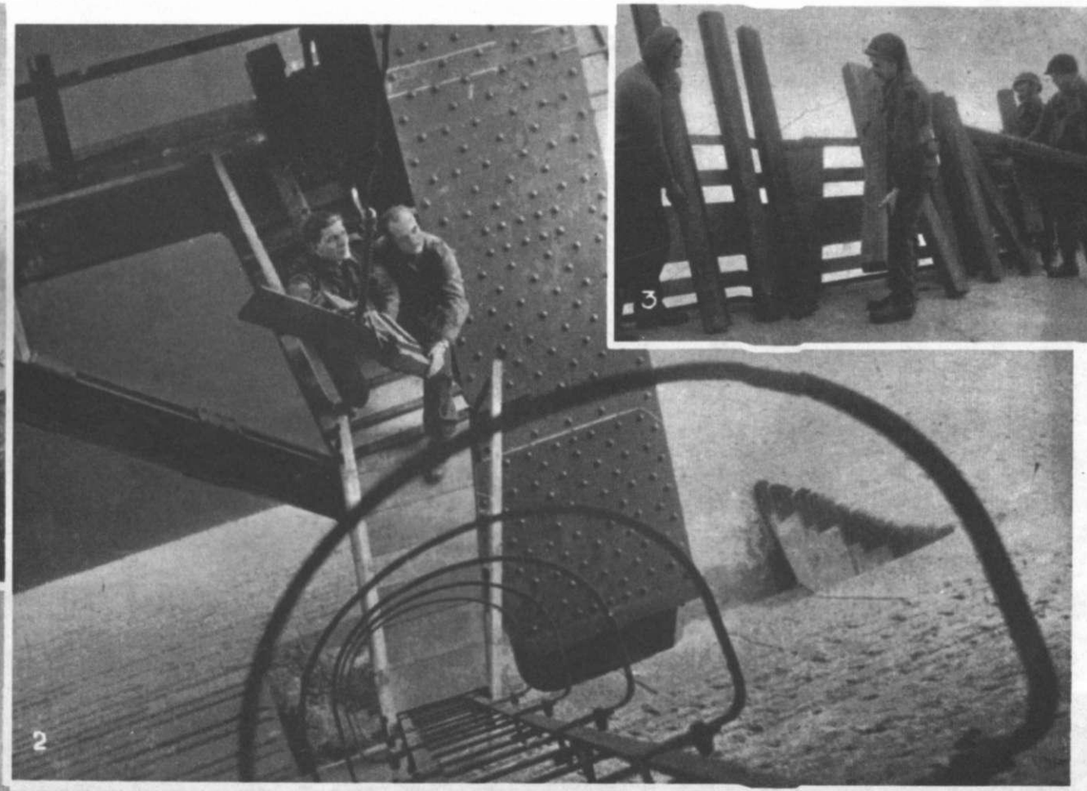


Photo, British Official

Reinforcements for our Sky-Troops in Holland

" The largest airborne operation ever conceived or executed," in the words of Mr. Churchill, " achieved a further all-important forward bound in the north " when on September 17, 1944, the 1st Allied Airborne Army commenced landings at Nijmegen, Eindhoven and Arnhem, to seize important bridges and extend the great corridor the British 2nd Army was driving through Holland. Aircraft towing gliders with reinforcements soared over a windmill (above) at Valkenswaard, south of Eindhoven.





The Vital Bridge at Nijmegen was Captured Intact—

Stormed from the south by tanks of the Grenadier Guards after U.S. airborne infantry had landed and prevented its demolition, the bridge over the Waal (Dutch Rhine) was taken intact by September 21, 1944. A 17-pounder kept watch across the river (1) whilst 10,000 lb. of explosive placed in the bridge piers by the enemy were removed. A British corporal and a sapper assisted in the removal (2); British and U.S. airborne troops helped to stack the 200-lb. dynamite charges (3).

Photos, British Official, P.N.A., British Newspaper Pool

—To Speed the Great Thrust to Northern Germany

Wreckage of the fierce fight to be cleared from the bridge included the last of the enemy defenders (4). Guarding the approach, a British sentry occupied the former German command post (5), which still displayed a framed portrait of Hitler. Past smashed vehicles our transport was soon speeding (6) towards the next river ahead—the Lek, an arm of the Rhine—beyond which, at Arnhem, the British 1st Airborne Division had been dropped to battle against overwhelming odds.

British Valour in the Hell that was Arnhem

Photos, British and U.S. Official

In hundreds the parachute troops of the 1st Airborne Army were dropped in landing areas from transport planes (1). Some, hard-pressed in their foxholes at Arnhem, bombarded German positions with three-inch mortars (2). Glider-borne troops of the Border Regiment, in a hastily-dug slit-trench, others lining the hedge beyond the road (3), waited tensely to repel attack by the enemy 100 yards away. Glider Pilot Regiment men searched for snipers in a shell-riddled school (4).

VIEWS & REVIEWS

Of Vital War Books

by Hamilton Fyfe

FACING me as I sit at my typewriter is a wall on which hang a number of Japanese colour prints. I have collected them gradually. Their beauty has given me pleasure for many years. Today I have noticed something about them that I never realized before. All the figures in them have cruel, sinister or cunning expressions on their faces. They are figures of actors, they are expressing the emotions proper to their parts; it had not struck me until today, when I glanced up at them from Mr. Joseph C. Grew's book, Ten Years in Japan (Hammond, 15s.) which I was reading, that all those emotions are of a harsh, threatening, belligerent character. And, according to Mr. Grew, who was United States Ambassador in Tokyo, that character is very quickly assumed by Japs when anything occurs to put them out, or when they are stirred to offensive demonstration by propaganda. In this they are very much like the ordinary run of North Germans.

When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour in December 1941 (Mr. Grew had warned Washington they might as far back as January of that year), little animosity was shown against foreigners in the capital for some days. The Japanese employees at the Embassy behaved very well indeed: they had always been treated by Americans with kindness and courtesy; they repaid this by loyalty in the dark hour. But when a few days had passed, other Japs who did not know any Americans and who were told to regard them as enemies began to behave badly and in a short time the feeling against both Americans and British in Tokyo was bitterly hostile. Even before war came Mr. Grew had seen many instances of overbearing, insolent conduct when there was no provocation whatever and, though he puts it on record that "there are no finer people in the world than the best type of Japanese," he comes to the reluctant conclusion that there are not many of them and that at present they have next to no influence in public affairs.

FOR a long time army officers, not of highest rank, have decided how the country shall be governed and what its foreign policy shall be. The Navy seemed to be a stabilizing factor. Its officers were not bellicose, they kept aloof from politics. But by 1938 there had come a change. The naval chiefs now felt they had too long allowed the army to "get all the glory" and had acted "merely as a beast of burden" for it. They resolved to make a bid for naval supremacy in East Asia as soon as the chance offered. By this time the army was in a position to create that chance. By assassination the more violent officers had removed some of the wisest of the Emperor's counsellors and had terrorized others. They obtained control over the Government. The only hope left to Japanese men of knowledge and understanding was that the Emperor's well-advertised desire for peace would prevent any disastrous outbreak. Count Makino, a leading member of the Cabinet, said in 1935, "There will never be any danger from military Fascism or Communism or any other kind of 'ism,' simply because the Emperor is supreme and will always have the last word." That must have been deliberate deception. Makino must have known that the Emperor was as weak and stupid as Oriental hereditary rulers generally have been. He did nothing to ward off the coming catastrophe. He may have been deceived by the declarations of his Ministers which so completely humbugged so many of the world's governing men.

One thing Mr. Grew learned and emphasizes: very few Japanese tell the truth if it be to their interest to lie. Yet they may not know they are lying. One of the most dishonest of their politicians told Mr. Grew: "We are too honest to be good poker players." Mr. Grew thinks he believed that. He says their mental processes and methods of reaching conclusions are radically different from those of Europeans and Americans.

> The Westerner believes that because the Japanese has adopted Western dress, language and customs he must think like a Westerner. No greater error can be made.

The Japanese Art of 'Let's Pretend'

When a Jap makes an agreement about anything, he intends to keep it as long as it suits him to do so.

> It isn't that he necessarily has his tongue in his cheek when he signs the obligation. It merely means that when the obligation runs counter to his own interests, as he conceives them, he will interpret the obligation to suit himself and, according to his own lights and mentality, he will very likely be perfectly honest in doing so.

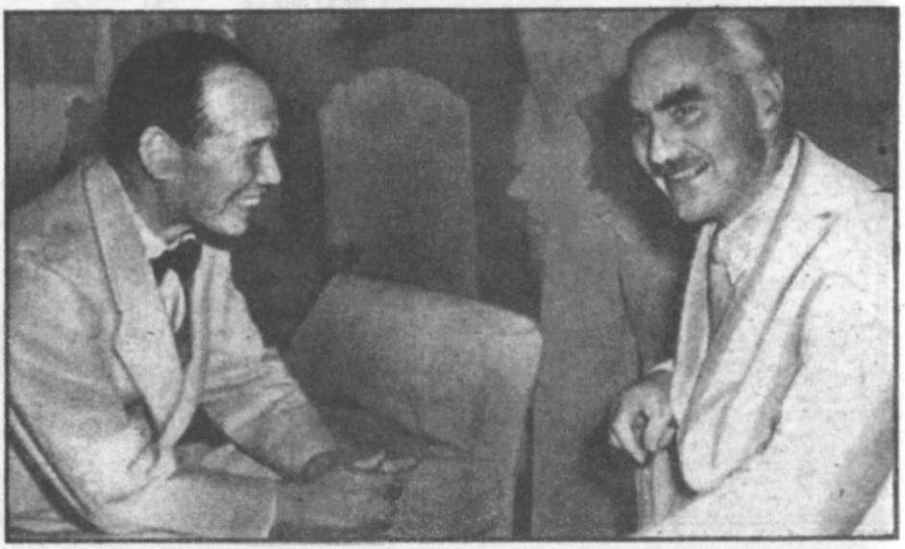
Now Mr. Grew calls this "one of the great cleavages between the East and the West." That is not correct. For the Chinese have a strong sense of the binding character of a promise. They will keep their word, they will carry out an undertaking even if it turns out to their disadvantage. Don't fancy that I am cracking up an ally and crying down an enemy just because one is friendly and the other hostile. I have pointed out this difference between Chinese and Japanese very often during the past thirty years, ever since I came to know something of both nationalities. It is a difference caused by their systems of education. The young Chinese are brought up to believe that their ancestors are watching them all the time and that they must not pain them by being dishonest. The young Japanese are taught that they are a master-race, that their Emperor is a kind of god, and that anything is permissible which they believe will extend his empire and increase his power.

Here is the explanation of those expressions on the faces of the people in my Japanese colour prints. Here is also a revealing light on what we call "national character," which is not inherited, but created by early training. It can be turned this way or that, just as the rulers decide to have this or that taught in their schools. We British used to be taught that we were the greatest nation on the face of the earth. Now we have dropped that nonsense. We are proud of some achievements of our forefathers. We remember some with a frown or a grin. We put on no airs of superiority and we are liked all the better for it.

THIS change in our "national character" offers hope for the future. Seeing it has been altered in the course of less than three generations, there is no reason to doubt that other national characters can be, if common sense and common honesty prevail over silly pretensions and a morality twisted by self-interest. The Japanese, says Mr. Grew, "love high-sounding formulas and slogans to cover whatever they want and intend to do, with the idea of imparting to their plans the most perfect righteousness, lulling themselves into the belief that their acts are wholly righteous." Now that is just what the mid-Victorians did to justify their actions.

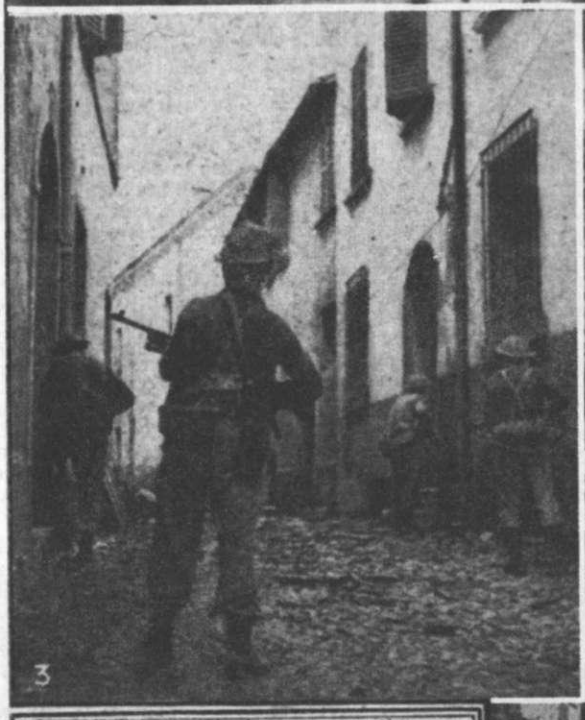
We followed self-interest and pretended—no, we did not pretend, we really believed we were acting on principle, doing the will of God. That is what the Japanese have been led to believe they are doing today. Mr. Grew discovered this and consequently refuses to hope they will soon be overcome. He thinks they will fight on fanatically, even when their hope of winning has disappeared. He has probably had something to do with the forecast or balance-sheet which has been officially published in the United States to counter what it calls the delusion that it will not take long to defeat Japan.

The one chance that this forecast may be falsified lies in a revolt against the rubbish talked about Japanese domination of the entire Pacific area, by the more intelligent among the Japanese themselves and the conversion of the masses to common sense. That there are plenty of such intelligent people Mr. Grew found out, but he does not feel sanguine about their being of any use. When crushing defeat has been inflicted on their army, navy and air force, the masses will be more ready to listen to reason. So far the unreason which has been pumped into them has it all its own way.



CONVERSATION IN TOKYO in 1941—before the treacherous attack on Pearl Harbour—between Mr. Joseph Grew (right), author of the book reviewed in this page, and Vice-Admiral Teijiro Toyoda, who was Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, July–Oct. 1941. Born in 1880, Mr. Grew was U.S. Ambassador to Japan, 1932–41. *Photo, New York Times Photos*

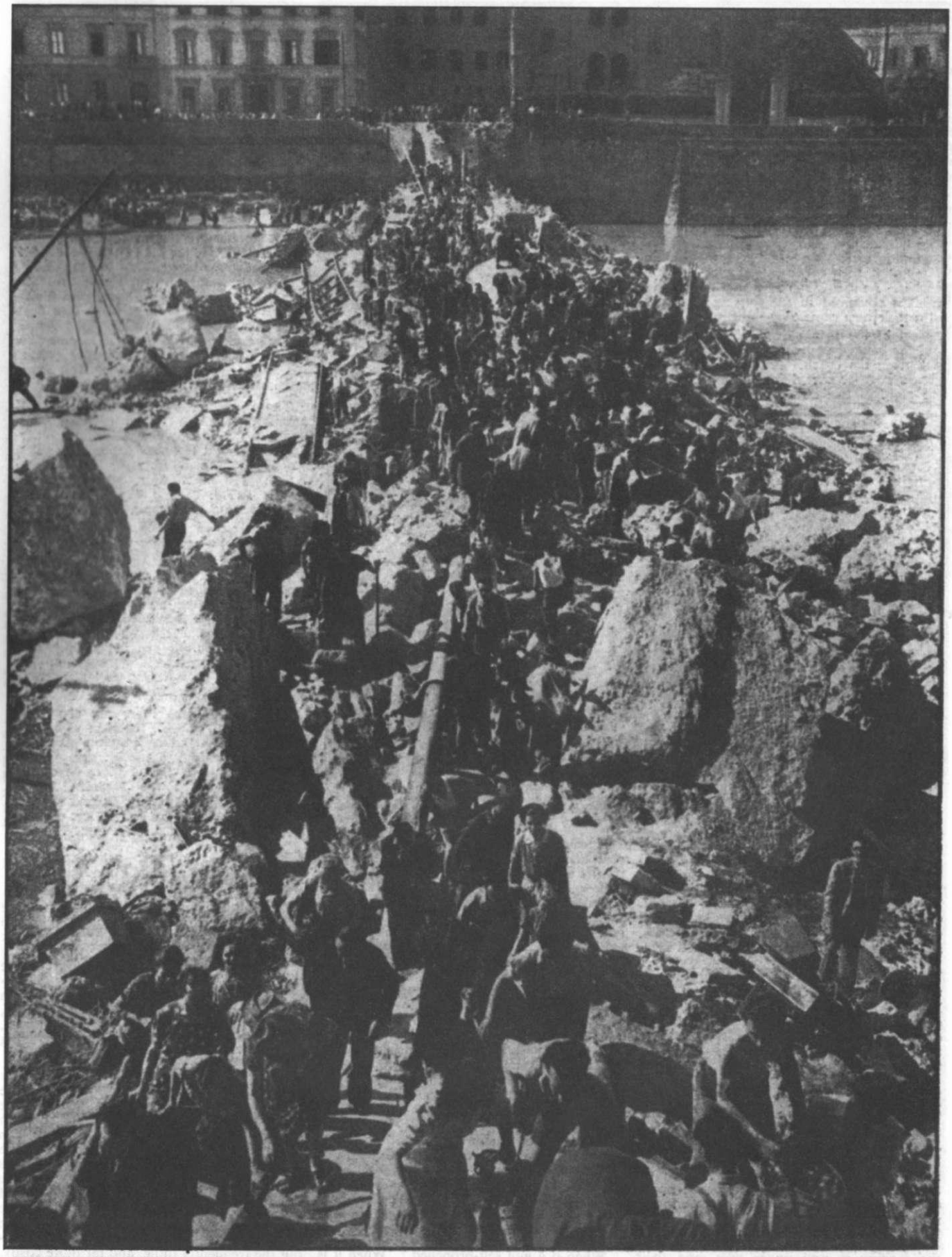
Greek Infantry With the 8th Army in Italy



RIMINI, ON THE ADRIATIC COAST, taken by the 8th Army on September 21, 1944, was finally cleared of the enemy by Greek troops advancing to the River Marecchia : they passed through the City Gate (1) to ruined streets (5) where they "mopped up" in a house-to-house search (3). German prisoners tramped through thick mud (4). Engineers of a British Field Company sweeping for mines at the entrance to the Republican State of San Marino (2). Map shows Allied line on October 3.

Photos, British Official. Map by courtesy of The Times

Going Home in Florence Now That They're Free



PICKING THEIR WAY THROUGH THE DEBRIS of the Ponte Alle Graxie, these Florentines crossed the River Arno to their homes after their city had been occupied and liberated by the Allies on September 12, 1944. Five of the six bridges spanning the Arno in Florence were destroyed by the Germans; the sixth—the fourteenth-century Ponte Vecchio—was left intact, though the enemy mined both banks of the river and mounted machine-guns in adjacent buildings (see also illus. page 227).

Photo, Keystone

Weapons in Brief: The Alphabet Goes to War

Communiqués and newspaper reports refer frequently to Service arms, weapons, secret and otherwise, ships and personnel, by initial letters and names which sometimes can be very puzzling to the reader. This craze for contraction is founded on good reason, for full titles can be cumbersome. These labels—some familiar, some strange—are explained by JOHN FLEETWOOD.

THE first craft to reach Normandy beaches with their spearhead freights were L.C.V.P.s (Landing Craft—Vehicles and Personnel), littlish fellows carried slung from the davits of troopships. The transports lowered their "babies" and, nose to tail, the little craft circled the mother ship, waiting for their crews to board them.

A few thousand yards offshore two patrol ships rode the swell, almost motionless. A mile or so apart, they marked the starting line just beyond the range of effective machine-gun fire. On these ships each wave of landing craft "dressed" like a battalion of infantry, then off they careered for the beaches. As each wave went in a new group of L.C.s advanced to the starting line, and when their turn came they went in too.

Most of the men moved off to find and fight the enemy, destroy his guns, push him back from the beach. A few stayed at the water's edge to signal in the landing craft and regulate the flow of supplies. These were the beach commander and his staff—no kin with the duckmaster of the DUKWS (the factory serial letters for D the boat, U the lorry body, KW the lorry chassis), but a mixed team of soldiers and seamen, whose duties are to see that each specialized section, either of personnel or stores, finds, as it lands, its right place in the beach area.

BACK with the bigger ships were larger landing vessels—L.C.I.s (Landing Craft—Infantry), some of the biggest of landing craft, with two disembarking ramps, one on either side of the bows; and L.S.T.s (Landing Ship—Tanks). Both of these are ocean-going vessels which move under their own power. An L.C.I. is 155 feet long; when she hits the shore, down go the twin ramps, and over 200 soldiers pour out on to the beach.

An L.S.T. is larger still; she is, in fact, a floating garage with vehicles clamped to her lower deck by heavy chains against the formidable roll these ships develop when on the move. Once beached, her mouth opens and trucks and vehicles of every description roll out of her; others are lifted by davits from her hold. By the time these ships go in, the landing is well under way, and their mobile freights quickly build up the power of the assault. In contrast with these large craft are the diminutive L.B.K.s (Landing Barge—Kitchen), baking bread and providing hot meals for the men who ferry supplies (see story and illus. in page 251).

It is a queer-looking family, this vast and varied breed of invasion craft. For one class—L.C.F.s (Landing Craft—Flak)—invasion found little work to do, the Allied Air Forces having had from the outset complete mastery of the air. And do you remember L.C.A.s (Landing Craft—Assault), the old originals, from which the men leaped straight over the bows, and whose proper duties were reversed to evacuate our troops from Norway and Dunkirk? When the time came to employ them for the role in which they were cast, the L.C. family had been varied and expanded a hundredfold. Latest in the list is the L.C.T.R. (Landing Craft Tank—Rocket). Everybody knows the M.T.B.s (motor-torpedo-boats), but the P.T.s are less familiar. P.T.s are American M.T.B.s, and America's "plywood navy" is giving a good account of itself.

CRUSADER BOFORS A.A. TANK, in operation against the enemy in Europe, is a development of the Bofors 40-mm. S.P. (self-propelled) gun mentioned in this page. Designed primarily for the protection of convoys on the move against low-flying aircraft, it fires 2-lb. shells at the rate of 120 per minute. *Photo, British Official*

Normandy beaches are a glorious page of past history, but it is not too late to pay tribute to the N.B.S.O. (Naval Bomb Safety Officer), who with his Naval and Marine colleagues has immunized hundreds of mines in the sea and on beaches since D-Day. Few serving men were more symbolic of the spirit of Britain during the long dark years of the U-boat and Luftwaffe peril than the M.R.A. At one period in action almost every day and night of the year, more than 7,000 gunners of the Maritime Royal Artillery, spread over the seven seas in ships of the Merchant Navy, were constantly on the alert for aircraft, U-boats and surface raiders. Dubbed "Churchill's Sharpshooters" because they were formed at the instance of the Prime Minister himself, these artillerymen on loan to the Navy can operate 20 different kinds of guns, and other defensive weapons.

Speaking of gunnery, one of the best things that ever came out of our gun laboratories is the Projector, Infantry, Anti-Tank—P.I.A.T., for short—which fires a bomb that will pierce four inches of the sturdiest armour-plate and inflict serious damage on the interior of tanks, often killing the crew.

When is a gun self-propelled? When it is mounted on either a truck or tractor so that it can be fired without dismounting or unlimbering. The Bofors 40-mm. S.P., long a mainstay of Britain's A.A. defences, is a prime example of the guns of the self-propelled class. It is power-elevated and traversed, and fires 2-lb. shells to a height of 6,000 feet at 120 a minute. The Morris chassis, or modified version of the artillery Quad (tractor), on which it is mounted, gives the Bofors a maximum road speed of 40 m.p.h., rendering it one of our fastest mobile weapons and an invaluable protection for convoys en route.

MOST mobile of all are machine-guns, especially those of the L.M.G. (Light Machine-Gun) class—the Lewis, Bren and the machine carbine, the Sten. But the Heavies run them very close for mobility, since the Vickers and its like are nowadays carried as nearly as possible into action on wheeled transport. To the tank family there has recently been added the A.V.R.E. (Armoured Vehicle, Royal Engineers), the new British mortar tank. (See illus. in opposite page.)

Those responsible for inspecting the ammunition eaten up in such enormous quantities by today's swift-firing guns are persons of vast technical experience, yet the work is being increasingly done by the A.T.S. Ten A.E.s (Ammunition Examiners) of the A.T.S. at one depot alone inspect and supervise the repair, examination and packing of tons of live ammunition every week, working in isolated groups in dispersed sheds.

Girls of one of the manifold branches of work now handled by the A.T.S. are known in the Army, and outside it, as O.W.L.s, though the girls themselves are not smitten with the name. However, the soubriquet was not chosen; it just happened, for the letters mean Operators, Wireless and Line, these Signals girls serving as "linemen" as well as radio operators.

In other spheres there are the P.O.L. units of the R.A.S.C., the men who handle the unshipping and distribution of the life-blood of modern battle—Petrol, Oil and Lubricants; and the F.S.U.s—the Field Surgical Units of the R.A.M.C., whose duties take them close up behind the front line so that they may operate on casualties from one to six hours after injury.

COMMUNIQUÉS on air activities talk of Emergency Landing Grounds as E.L.G.s. D.E.O.P.S. are supplies dropped from aircraft without a parachute attached. The Special Force referred to in S.E.A.C. (South East Asia Command) communiqués are the Chindits formed by General Wingate. Many of these dispatches allude to Japanese Bunkers. These vary in size from a one-man foxhole with a lid, to a section bunker accommodating from six to 26 men, well provisioned with food and ammunition, and equipped with sleeping bays, cooking quarters and latrines.

Sometimes a cryptic military term must preserve its mystery, unchallenged. The L.C.O.C.U., for instance, is still on the secret list. A weapon lately released from it is the M1-A1, a new type of American "flame-gun," a fearful weapon, as the enemy has learned to his cost. M1-A1 is far superior to anything so far used by the foe, and the intense, all-enveloping liquid fire-power it develops seems largely to have solved the riddle of breaking down the Nazi-developed pillbox defence in depth, without the frequently futile, and far more costly, expenditure of high explosives. An illustrated description of Britain's flame-throwers is given in pages 300 and 301.

A.V.R.E is Added to Allies' Mighty Armoury

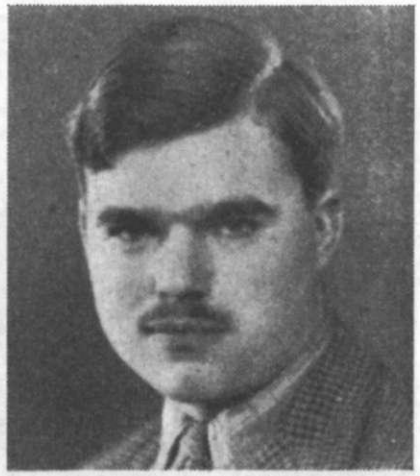
BRITISH MORTAR TANK, THE A.V.R.E. (Armoured Vehicle, Royal Engineers) specialises in the assault of powerful fortifications, such as the Siegfried Line, and the "West Wall" defences through which it smashed on D-Day. Resembling a Churchill, it carries a flexible track for carpeting insecure ground or forming a causeway across a hole, ditch or stream—a fascine or bundle of chestnut palings (1), which is unloaded (2) where required. Main armament is a mortar mounted in the turret (3); this hurls a "flying dustbin" (4) containing a great weight of explosive. A.V.R.E.s moving up in France (5).

Photo, British Official

Heroism Beyond Praise: Their Award the V.C.

F./O. J. A. CRUICKSHANK, R.A.F.
After his Catalina flying-boat had been damaged and some of his crew killed by a shell from a U-boat, Flying-Officer Cruickshank, although wounded in 72 places, attacked and sank the U-boat and safely landed his battered plane. He was awarded the V.C. on September 2, 1944.

Sergeant M. W. ROGERS
A battalion of the Wiltshire Regiment was held up by wire and machine-gun fire in Italy. Advancing alone, Sgt. Rogers so confused the enemy defences that his platoon was enabled to attack. He was posthumously awarded the V.C. on Aug. 10, 1944.



Lance-Corporal J. P. HARMAN
Commanding an infantry section in the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regt., he annihilated an enemy machine-gun post which menaced his company at Kohima, Burma, on April 8, 1944. He was posthumously awarded the V.C. on June 22, 1944.

Company Sgt.-Maj. S. E. HOLLIS
On D-Day, C.-S.-M. Hollis, of the Green Howards, dealt with a pillbox threatening disembarking troops. He was the first Normandy V.C.

Private G. A. MITCHELL
A member of the London Scottish, Pte. Mitchell eliminated three enemy posts in single-handed attacks, January 23-24, 1944, at Damiano Ridge, Italy. He fell to the bullet of a German who had surrendered.

Sepoy KAMAL RAM
After the forcing of the River Gari, Italy, on May 12, 1944, the advance was held up by machine-gun fire from four enemy posts. Volunteering to silence them, Sepoy Kamal Ram of the 8th Punjab Regt., Indian Army (here receiving the V.C. from H.M. the King), overpowered the crew of the first post, then attacked the second which he also eliminated. He proceeded to clear up the remaining two, and by his action secured ground vital for the Allied bridge-heads.

Flt.-Lieut. D. E. HORNELL
Captain and 1st pilot of a Catalina flying-boat, he sighted a surfaced U-boat, and promptly attacked it. Although his plane was hit, he pressed home the attack, sank the submarine, and brought his blazing machine down on the sea. The Catalina's survivors were rescued after 21 hours, but Flt.-Lieut. Hornell (left) died of exhaustion. He was awarded the V.C. on July 28, 1944.

Cpl. (Act. Sergt.) H. V. TURNER
His dwindling platoon seriously harassed by Japanese near Ninhtoukong, Burma, Cpl. Turner (right) counter-attacked single-handed. Taking all grenades he could carry, he threw them " with devastating effect," and five times returned for more. He was killed on his sixth journey. The V.C. was awarded on August 17, 1944.

Photos, British Official; G.P.U., News Chronicle

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

It Was a 'Tough Do' at the Bridge of Arnhem

A handful of British parachute troops who fought on for three days and nights when surrounded at the end of the Arnhem bridge were taken prisoner, removed to Germany, then escaped to our lines. One of them, Lieut. D. Simpson, told the following story to B.U.P. war correspondent Richard McMillan, at Nijmegen, on Sept. 24, 1944. **See also pages 366–370.**

WE made a perfect drop on the outskirts of Arnhem. Within an hour my section had moved off towards their objective, the bridge over the lower Rhine in the heart of the town. In the darkness we passed through Osterbeek and reached Arnhem without any real opposition. Crouching through the streets, we reached the houses on the northern end of the bridge; our mission was to occupy them.

We got into a school building underneath the approach to the bridge, with the first storey above bridge level. The other section occupied other buildings there. That first night we made a charge against the pillbox guarding the bridge and set fire to an ammunition dump inside the pillbox, which blew up. Twenty Germans ran out with their hands up.

We then pulled back and began fortifying the schoolhouse. By this time the Germans had gathered a force and were attacking the next house with tanks which came along the river embankment and fired from a range of thirty yards. Some of the men driven out of this house crept over to the school under cover of darkness and joined us. Others got through from another battalion to add to our force. We then mustered about fifty.

The next enemy move was to machine-gun the school from the rooftops of adjoining buildings. When this failed, they set several houses on fire, hoping that the wind would carry the flames to the school. That move failed too. About midday a convoy of German half-track vehicles came over the bridge. We opened up with our Brens and Sten guns and killed the men riding in them. The lorries caught fire. That night there were blazing houses and blazing lorries, and the enemy started mortaring.

Then, in the darkness, from the side farthest from the flames, the enemy began stalking towards the school. We spied them in time, and dropped hand grenades on them. After five minutes they withdrew, leaving behind a mortar, two machine-guns and several Bazookas. On Tuesday a Mark III tank appeared with fifteen infantrymen, and began a furious firing. This scrap went on most of the day. One of our men crept across the road and dropped a bomb from a housetop on to the tank and disabled it.

That evening the Germans again tried to burn us out, but our men got out on the rooftop when the flames spread to the school and managed to put the fire out. All night long Tiger tanks roamed round shelling the school until it was riddled like a sieve. The adjoining house burned to a shell. It was a hectic night, mortars adding to the din and havoc. The next day—D-plus 3—was so quiet that we thought the Germans had pulled out, but at 10 in the morning two Tigers starting battering away once more. By this time we had rigged up a radio and were talking from one house to another, comparing notes.

From our second floor we could see Germans working on the bridge and realized that they were putting in demolition charges. It was time for us to take action! We rushed out with fixed bayonets through the enemy fire, cleared the Germans from the bridge, and removed the charges. Then the Germans counter-attacked, and we withdrew to our houses. They set fire to the school, and the building began to fall in.

ONE OF THE ARNHEM WARRIORS, this member of the British 1st Airborne Division stood guard at Divisional H.Q. there during a desperate phase of the fighting.
Photo, British Official

We had 21 wounded and decided to try to get out with them. There were now 45 altogether in our party. We got as far as the next house when the Germans raked us and pinned us down. Under this very heavy fire we suffered further casualties. The wounded now totalled 35, and it was decided to leave four men with them and give the rest a chance to escape. But as we got clear of the houses, the Germans closed in and forced the last six to surrender.

The rest of the glowing story was told by Corporal Charles Weir, of Richmond Terrace, Aberdeen, and Corporal John Humphreys, of Wormsley, Herefordshire. He and Weir, munching food at an open-air kitchen, paid tribute to the gallantry of their officers. It was just another adventure for Humphreys. He had already been captured in the Italian campaign, and escaped from prison at Ancona.

"It was a tough do on the bridge at Arnhem," Humphreys admitted between hungry bites into a huge meat sandwich. "A tough do!"

STEPPING ASHORE AT NIJMEGEN these survivors from the battle of the bridge at Arnhem, whose adventures are related in this page, reached the British 2nd Army after the small boat in which they made their escape from German captivity had carried them down the Rhine and the Waal. Left to right, Cpl. J. Humphreys, Cpl. C. Weir, and Lieut. D. Simpson, narrator of the story; the fourth man unnamed, for security reasons. In the background is the Nijmegen bridge.
Photo, British Newspaper Pool

A SINGLE PARACHUTE MINE DID THIS in London's East End. The scene of destruction is at the junction of Arcadia Street and Latham Street, Poplar; the date, during 1941. London's ordeal in the blitz period 1940-1941 was intensified by the enemy's use of this weapon, which contained between one and two tons of H.E. A comparatively small crater was made when the parachute mine struck, but great devastation was caused over a large area by the terrific blast, as is shown in the photograph above. *Photo, Keystone*

I Watched a German Parachute Mine Explode

A B.B.C. engineer, Mr. L. D. Macgregor, recently broadcast a remarkable story of the 1940 raids on London. Leaving Broadcasting House on a Sunday evening—Dec. 8 of that year—he suddenly saw what seemed to be a "very large tarpaulin" falling. What happened then is related below.

I CROUCHED down in what is known as "Prone Falling Position No. 1." Even at that moment I thought the danger was coming farther up Portland Place. My head was up watching, and before I could reach Position No. 2 and lie down flat the thing exploded.

I had a momentary glimpse of a large ball of blinding white light with two concentric rings of colour, the inner ones lavender and the outer ones violet. The ball seemed to be ten to twenty feet high and was near the lamp-post. The explosion made a noise something like a colossal growl and was accompanied by a veritable tornado of air blast. I felt an excruciating pain in my ears, and all sounds were replaced by a loud singing noise—which was when I lost my hearing.

I felt that consciousness was slipping from me, and at that moment I seemed to hear a loud clear voice shouting, "Don't let yourself go! Face up to it and hold on!" It rallied me, and summoning all my will power and energy I succeeded in forcing myself down into a crouching position with my knees on the ground, my feet against the kerb behind me and my hands covering my face.

Just as I felt that I could not hold out much longer I realized that the blast pressure was decreasing, and a shower of dust, dirt and rubble swept across me. Pieces penetrated my face and something pierced my knuckles, causing me involuntarily to let go my hold on the kerb. Instantly, although the blast was dying down, I felt myself blown slowly across the pavement towards the wall of the building.

THEY HEARD A THUD in the night, but no explosion; the coming of daylight revealed the presence in this back garden of a house at Finsbury Park, North London, of an enemy mine which had failed to "go off." Yet another which did not explode (left) was discovered hanging by its parachute against a wall of the Royal Free Hospital, London. *Photos, Planet News, Keystone*

I tried to hold on, but there was nothing to hold on to. Twice I tried to rise but seemed held down. Eventually I staggered to my feet, and I looked around. The front of the building was lit by reddish yellow light. A saloon car was on fire to the left of me, and flames from it were stretching out towards the building horizontally. Pieces of brick, masonry and glass seemed to appear suddenly on the pavement, making—to me—no sound. Right in front of me were two soldiers, one near a breach in the wall of the building where a fire seemed to be raging. He was propped up against the wall with his arms dangling like a rag doll.

I made for the entrance of the building to get help. It was obscured by dust and smoke, and I nearly fell over a large steel plate which was blocking the entrance. Fearing that the car's tank would explode and envelop the injured soldier in flames, I hurried back to him and with him clinging to me we were able to reach the entrance. Soon after that we got help.

It's Like Heaven Now in War-Free Malta

Our Mediterranean strongpoint against complete Axis domination of the inland sea from Gibraltar to Egypt, Malta suffered almost to the limit of endurance. Back in the George Cross island again, George Harrison, News of the World war correspondent, tells what life there is like today, with the people rebuilding their homes as fast as they can.

TWO years ago we were trying to blast history's most famous convoy through to this island in the face of every known horror the Nazis could raise to prevent us. For two and a half days 14 merchant ships ploughed through the Mediterranean under the wings of the Royal Navy escorts from Gibraltar, while Axis bombers, torpedo-bombers, submarines, and E-boats flailed them minute by minute.

Five of the merchant ships, with cargoes of mercy for the besieged islanders, got through, and as the crews came ashore in Valetta the Maltese people—weeping and praying—tossed flowers at their feet and kissed them, openly unashamed at their display of heart-bursting joy.

There was only a week's food in the island then. Luxuries like meat were unknown. The peasants were reduced to snatching grains of corn out of the derelict, bomb-splashed fields to take home and jealously pound into portions of stone-mixed flour—when sufficient had been collected. The legs and arms of the people were scarred with the

marks of scabies, which, through malnutrition, had struck viciously at them.

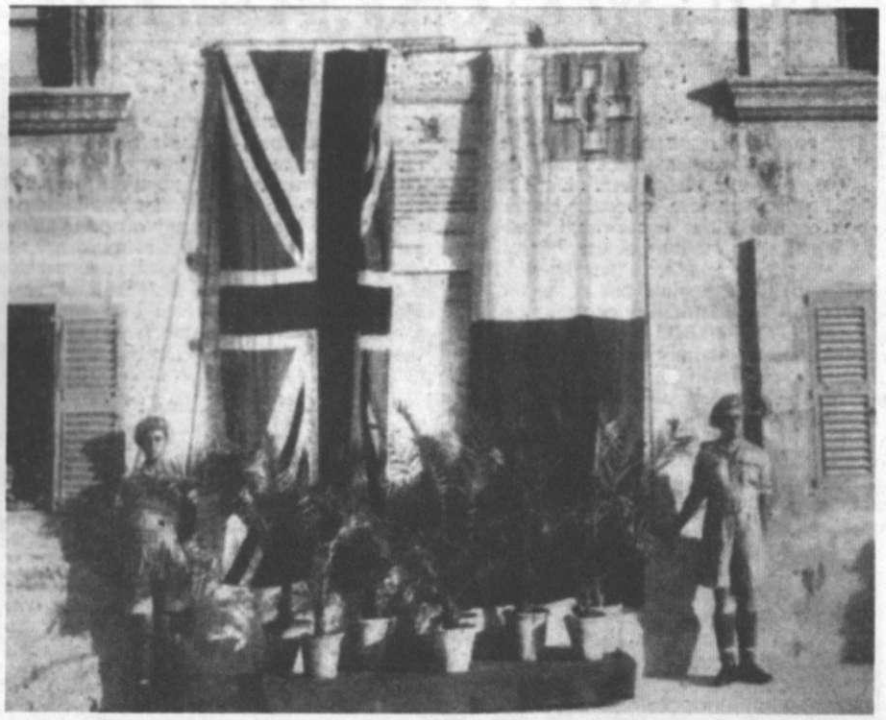
Today, 24 months later, I am here in Malta again, revelling, like its people, in the contrast between then and now. The war has now passed by this island. Even the black-out has gone. Coming from the battle fronts of Italy, it is strange to walk down Kingsway, the main shopping street in Valetta—still showing at every few yards its tumbledown ruins—and see the shop windows gaily illuminated and the street lights blazing brilliantly under the stars, with courting couples, arm-in-arm, pausing to shop-gaze.

Once before when I was here you might buy two small pork chops in the black market for about 30 shillings. Today in the restaurant where I had lunch the menu included: Fillets of fish and chips—two shillings; mixed grill and veg.—three shillings; two pork chops and veg.—two shillings. Then there was a whole mass of cold meats with salad for half-a-crown. I ordered steak and chips for the first time for many months. Garnished with onions and tomatoes it was delicious. Afterwards I took Philip Mifsud, the manager of the restaurant, aside and asked him about Malta's food position.

"We serve around 500 meals daily," he said. "Living in Malta today is like Heaven compared with the days of the siege. Take potatoes, which are the mainstay of the Maltese peasant's life. Thanks to the Government aid to our island growers we now receive unlimited supplies at 2d. per lb. In the old days when the whole crop had been eaten, we traded gold rings and bracelets worth pounds for a small sack from some careful farmer who had kept a few by him.

"Then we used to have a soup kitchen issue—twice a week soup, twice macaroni, and twice tinned fish, with a family ration once every two weeks of 2½ ozs. of corned beef. Now, thank God (and he crossed himself devoutly) every man, woman and child in Malta can eat well."

Even "night life" has returned to the island. The bars have whisky, gin and beer. True they are expensive, but that is a minor consideration to those of us who have not tasted them for so many months. Clothing is plentiful in the shops but strictly couponed, and luxuries like chocolates are still under the counter. Lipsticks and cosmetics, which were rarer than diamonds two years ago, are now on show. Malta, one way and another, certainly buzzes with life.



IN MALTA'S PALACE SQUARE, VALETTA, two bronze tablets, one of which is here shown, were unveiled on September 8, 1944. These commemorated the King's Message bestowing the George Cross on Malta on April 15, 1942, and President Roosevelt's citation commemorating his visit to the Island on December 7, 1943. *Photo, Sport and General*

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

SEPTEMBER 27 Wednesday *1,852nd day*

Western Front.—British 2nd Army launched limited attack S. of Arnhem.

Air.—Railway yards and oil plants at Cologne, Ludwigshafen, Mainz and Kassel again attacked by Allied bombers. R.A.F. bombed Calais.

Balkans.—Announced that Allied seaborne and airborne troops were operating in Albania and Dalmatian Is.

SEPTEMBER 28, Thursday *1,853rd day*

Western Front.—Canadians captured citadel of Calais. German swimmers attempted to blow up Nijmegen bridge.

Air.—Allied bombers again attacked war industries in Central Germany, at Merseburg, Kassel and Magdeburg.

Russian Front.—Announced that agreement made between Russian Command and Marshal Tito for entry of Red Army troops into Yugoslavia.

Pacific.—Announced that Allied aircraft from Australia raided Batavia on September 24 in record flight of nearly 3,000 miles.

SEPTEMBER 29, Friday *1,854th day*

Western Front.—Armistice at Calais for evacuation of civilians. Cape Gris Nez captured by Canadians.

Air.—Allied bombing attacks continued on area of Siegfried Line.

Russian Front.—All Estonia freed of Germans, except islands of Moon, Dago and Oesel.

Pacific.—Allied aircraft destroyed shipping in Darvel Harbour, Borneo.

SEPTEMBER 30, Saturday *1,855th day*

Air.—Allied heavy bombers pounded railway yards at Hamm, Munster and Bielefeld and oil plants in Ruhr.

Russian Front.—Announced that Red Army troops had crossed Yugoslav frontier from Rumania.

Pacific.—Liberators made attack on Balikpapan, oil centre of Borneo.

Home Front.—Dover celebrated capture of all German cross-Channel guns.

General.—Gen. Komorowski (Bor) to replace Gen. Sosnkowski as C.-in-C Polish Army.

OCTOBER 1, Sunday *1,856th day*

Western Front.—Resistance ended at Calais. German counter-attack south of Arnhem beaten off.

Air.—At night R.A.F. bombers attacked Brunswick.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops captured island of Moon, off Estonia.

OCTOBER 2, Monday *1,857th day*

Western Front.—U.S. 1st Army began new attack on Siegfried Line north of Aachen.

Air.—Allied bombers and fighters attacked Kassel, Hamm and the area of Cologne. R.A.F. again bombed Brunswick at night.

General.—Inhabitants of Dutch Islands in Scheldt estuary warned of coming Allied bombardment and flooding.

OCTOBER 3, Tuesday *1,858th day*

Western Front.—Truce began at Dunkirk for evacuation of civilians. U.S. 3rd Army began attack on Fort Driant, one of Metz defences.

Air.—R.A.F. Lancasters breached dyke on Walcheren Island. Announced that on night of September 23 Lancasters had bombed and drained Dortmund-Ems Canal. U.S. bombers attacked tank works and airfields in S. Germany.

Poland.—End of Polish resistance in Warsaw after 63 days' fighting; Gen. Komorowski (Bor) taken prisoner.

Russian Front.—Island of Dago, off Estonia, captured by Soviet troops.

OCTOBER 4, Wednesday *1,859th day*

Western Front.—Perimeter forts north of Antwerp being cleared of enemy.

Air.—R.A.F. bombers attacked U-boat pens at Bergen. Announced that attack on battleship Tirpitz on September 15 was launched from Russian base.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops linked up with units of Yugoslav Liberation Army.

Mediterranean.—Allied bombers attacked Munich and points on Brenner line.

Balkans.—Units of Land Forces, Adriatic, operating on Greek mainland, entered Patras in the Peloponnesus.

OCTOBER 5, Thursday *1,860th day*

Western Front.—Allied troops crossed Dutch frontier north of Antwerp.

Air.—Allied bombers attacked railways and airfields in Cologne and Munster areas. R.A.F. Lancasters bombed Wilhelmshaven, and at night dropped 350,000 incendiaries on Saarbruecken. Mosquitoes bombed Berlin.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops began attack on Estonian island of Oesel.

Pacific.—Liberators again bombed Balikpapan oil centre, Borneo.

Germany.—Call-up for military service of all boys born in 1928.

OCTOBER 6, Friday *1,861st day*

Western Front.—Canadian troops crossed Leopold Canal between Bruges and Eecloo.

Air.—Hamburg, Harburg and Berlin attacked by U.S. bombers and fighters. R.A.F. bombed oil plants in the Ruhr by day, and Dortmund, Bremen and Berlin at night.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops crossed Rumanian-Hungarian frontier N. of Arad.

Balkans.—British and Greek troops captured Aegean island of Samos.

OCTOBER 7, Saturday *1,862nd day*

Western Front.—U.S. 1st Army broke through German line N. of Aachen. Heavy fighting in Leopold Canal bridge-head.

Air.—More than 5,000 aircraft from Britain and Italy, in biggest daylight assault of the war, attacked German war plants. Kembs dam on Rhine in Alsace breached by R.A.F. Lancasters.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops began new Lithuanian offensive towards East Prussia.

OCTOBER 8, Sunday *1,863rd day*

Western Front.—U.S. 1st Army began new offensive east of Aachen. 3rd Army attacked between Metz and Nancy.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops broke German defence line in Central Lithuania.

Pacific.—Marcus Island shelled for first time by U.S. warships.

OCTOBER 9, Monday *1,864th day*

Western Front.—Canadians and British landed in mouth of Sheldt to relieve pressure on Leopold Canal bridge-head.

Air.—U.S. bombers attacked areas of Schweinfurt, Cologne and Mainz. At night R.A.F. bombed Bochum in the Ruhr.

Balkans.—Allied troops entered Corinth.

Far East.—U.S. carrier-aircraft attacked Ryuku Islands, between Formosa and Japan.

General.—Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden arrived in Moscow.

OCTOBER 10, Tuesday *1,865th day*

Western Front.—Twenty-four hour ultimatum sent to Aachen by Allies after city had been almost surrounded.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops reached Baltic coast north of Memel.

Flash-backs

1939

September 27. *Surrender of Warsaw, capital of Poland.*

1940

September 27. *Tripartite Pact between Germany, Italy and Japan signed in Berlin.*

October 7. *German troops entered Rumania and occupied oilfields.*

1941

September 28. *Lord Beaverbrook and Mr. Harriman in Moscow for Three Power Conference.*

October 6.—*Two-pronged assault against Moscow launched by Germans under Von Bock.*

October 8. *Russian Command announced evacuation of Orel.*

1942

October 3. *U.S. troops occupied Andreanos group of Aleutians.*

October 4. *Combined Operations raid on Sark, Channel Islands.*

1943

October 1. *Fifth Army captured city of Naples.*

October 5. *Strong U.S. naval and air forces attacked Wake Island.*

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

THE Luftwaffe has attempted to maintain attacks against Greater London with flying-bombs launched from Heinkel bombers over the North Sea. Dark nights, or the periods before moonrise, have been used for launching, but several times the starting of the jet-engine of the flying-bomb, with its tell-tale flame, has revealed the position of the parent aircraft to the watchful eyes of R.A.F. night fighter pilots, and a good percentage of the small number of Heinkels employed on this nocturnal venture have paid for their temerity in encroaching within the patrol area of defending fighters of A.D.G.B. This effort of the Luftwaffe was forecast in page 316, but, as expected, the attacks have been small scale intermittent launchings, sometimes with intervals of several days between them.

WALCHEREN SEA WALL on the German-occupied island at the Scheldt entrance, was breached by R.A.F. Lancasters carrying 12,000-lb. bombs in a daylight attack on October 3, 1944. Here the waters of the North Sea are rapidly submerging the village of Westkapelle and enemy gun positions covering the approaches to Antwerp. By October 10 flooding had extended to Middelburg in the centre of the island. *Photo, British Official*

It has now been stated officially that jet-propelled fighters were used in the defence of London and Southern England against the flying-bomb attack when the Pas de Calais launching sites were in use by the enemy (see page 354). These fast planes are extremely clean in design, and the absence of airscrew means that a shorter undercarriage can be used. Length of undercarriage leg is usually determined by the need to provide safe clearance between the tip of the revolving airscrew and the ground. The jet-plane's shorter undercarriage saves both weight and stowage space; the saving in space means that there is more room inside the structure for other items, such as fuel, and this is of great importance in a small aircraft like a fighter. People on the ground within the flying-bomb lanes of approach to London nicknamed the jet-propelled fighters "jettys."

The withdrawal of the remaining 2,000 men of the British 1st Airborne Division from Arnhem (see p. 366) disclosed that current airborne forces are not armed powerfully enough to enable them to hold out against surface forces heavily armed with guns and armour. Against these the 10-ton tanks and 6- and 17-pounder anti-tank guns used by the Airborne Army of today are too light to prevent Units from being compressed into pockets so small that the accurate dropping of supplies of food and war stores by parachute may become impossible. To prevent this they must be relieved rapidly by their own surface heavy armour and guns.

TRANSPORTATION of Heavy Guns and Large Tanks by Air

The notable lesson learned from this greatest-ever airborne operation was that full-scale airborne operations against first-class military Powers will have to include the landing of heavy calibre guns and heavy tanks from the air. The time will come when 30-ton and even heavier tanks will be transported to their operational zone by air. This will introduce specially designed tank transport aircraft. Incidentally, I observe that it has been announced that it was realized in June 1940 that tank-carrying aircraft would be needed. There must be some mistake here, for on April 18, 1940, I took out a provisional patent for a novel design of tank-carrying aircraft, of which the Air Ministry was promptly advised.

President Roosevelt indicated what is being done already in military air transportation when, on October 5, he said that 20,000 tons of military supplies were being flown into China monthly. From India to China, after the Lashio road was cut, aircraft flew over the southern slopes of the Himalaya Mountains, carrying their load up to 20,000 feet (see pages 716, 717, Vol. 7). It must take about 1,300 h.p. to lift one ton over the divide, and the petrol expended per month on the climbing of the mountain range alone would weigh some 6,000 tons, apart from that used in the flight onward to the destination airfield in China. But this lift of about a quarter of a million tons a year is doubtless but a fraction of what is required by the Chinese to meet the continued onslaught of the Japanese army within China, fed, as it is, by rail from Korea and Manchuria, and by sea from Japan and Korea, with military stores of all kinds. And no doubt in the occupied area of China there are Chinese enslaved by the Japanese war machine to make whatever the Japanese war lords decree.

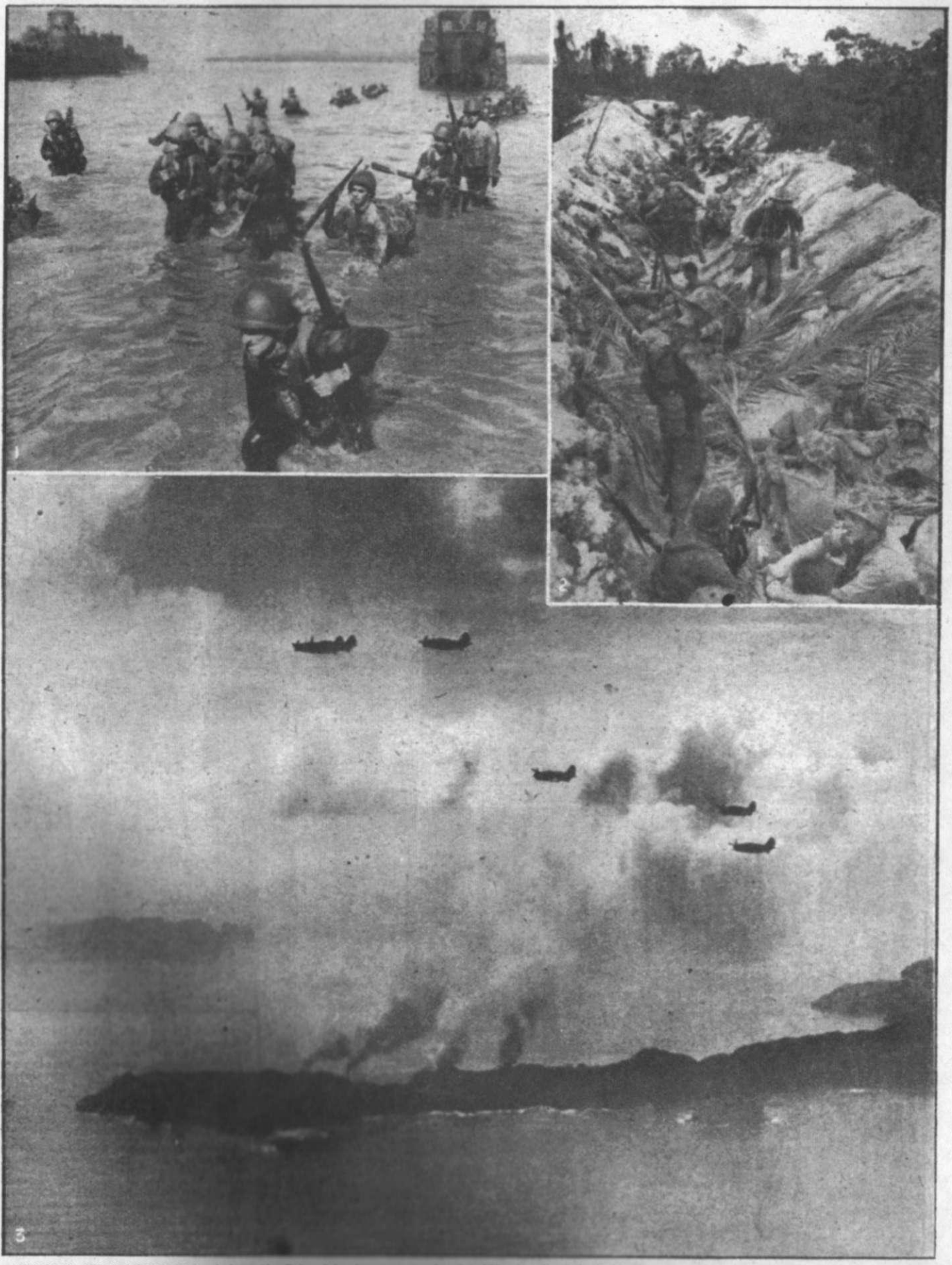
By comparison with China's needs the air transport lift, great feat though it is, is puny, and the advances through the islands from Australia towards the Chinese coast must seem snail-like, great efforts of organization by white men in tropical conditions though these be. As a result the Japanese have encircled another great slice of China, and have cut off the airfields from which Japan proper was being bombed by Super-Fortresses.

THE work of these giant bombers was valuable, but we know from experience of bombing Germany how vast a total weight of bombs is needed to put a highly organized war industrial machine out of action. It is probable that the bomb load of the Super-Fortresses operating at the range they have had to fly may not exceed some 6,000 lb. of bombs per aircraft per trip. There cannot yet be many of these aircraft in operation; the production output in the United States was recently disclosed as now scheduled for the rate of about 1,000 a year. So far the bombing cannot have been much more than a token of what is later to come, much as was the British bombing of Germany in 1940-41. At its present stage of development the war in the air in the Far East is necessarily tied by the limitations of the surface forces, and the only way in which the bombing of Japan, and Japanese communications with their armies in China, could be stepped up rapidly would be by carrier-borne aircraft, a hazardous operation with the disposition of forces as they are at present.

Great bombing blows in Western Europe, however, indicate what Japan must eventually face. One was the destruction of a vital length of the Dortmund-Ems canal by a force of 96 Lancasters led by Wing-Commander G. W. Curry, D.F.C., on September 23, 1944, when 14 bombers were lost. This canal was attacked by five Hampdens under Flt.-Lieut. R. A. B. Learoyd in the early morning of August 13, 1940, when Learoyd won the V.C. for his part in the action (see page 222, Vol. 3). It connects the Ruhr with north-western Germany and joins the sea at Emden—another recent target for our bombers. The force of Lancasters used 12,000-lb. bombs and broke the canal banks, leaving it dry for a length of about 18 miles; this compares with a small section of one of the twin branches of the canal at the aqueducts north of Munster which Learoyd's attack drained, but which was soon blanked off for repair by the enemy. The Lancaster attack on the canal was followed by a heavy bomber attack on Dortmund (important rail centre) in the night following October 5.

ON October 3, 1944, in daylight at high tide, Bomber Command smashed the sea dyke near Westkapelle, Walcheren island, to flood the German gun sites that covered Antwerp. For this operation 12,000-lb. bombs were used. Like the breaching of the Möhne and Eder dams, this was a novel air attack, unlike anything ever executed before. It is noteworthy that only British heavy bombers can make these devastating attacks; the U.S. heavy bombers cannot transport such huge bombs.

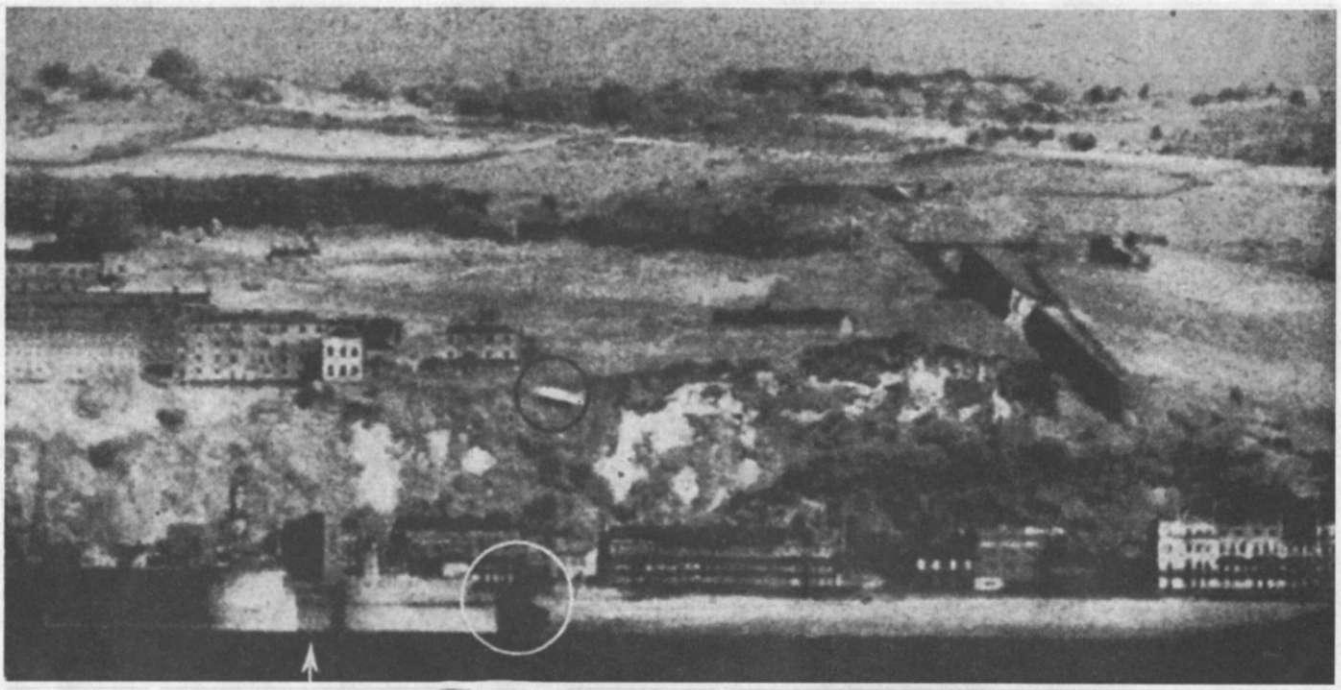
Our Pacific Forces Move Still Nearer to Japan

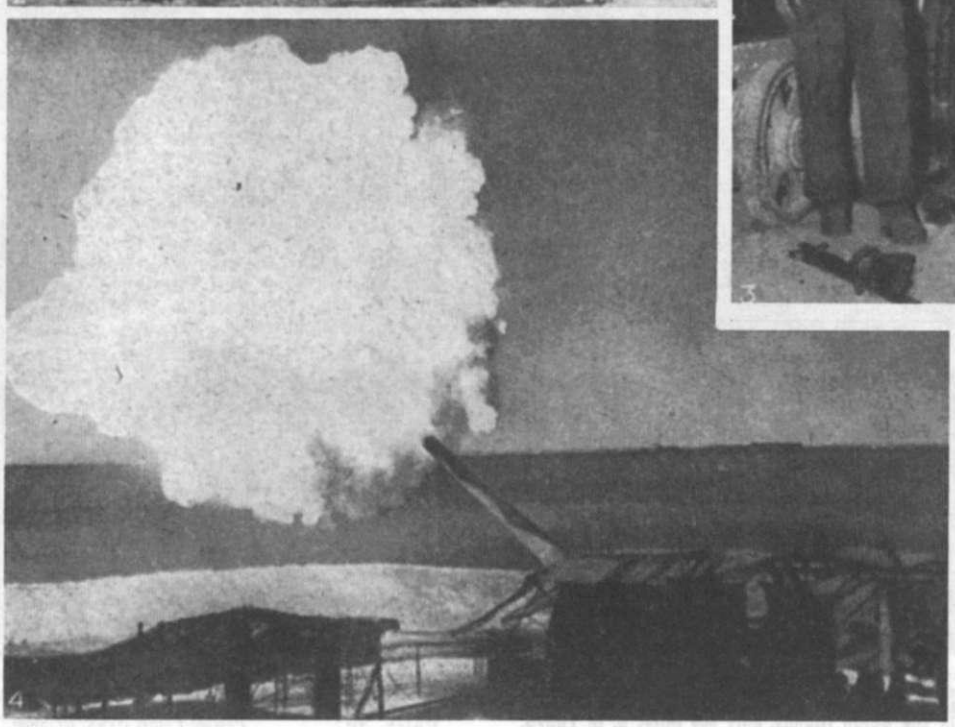


ADMIRAL NIMITZ'S MEN landed on the Palau Islands, an enemy bastion 550 miles E. of the Philippines, on September 15, 1944, and quickly established themselves in palm-strewn trenches abandoned by the Japanese (1). At the same time, General MacArthur's forces invaded Morotai in the Halmahera group, 300 miles S. of the Philippines ; infantry waded ashore from landing craft (1). Columns of smoke (3) marked the destruction o four enemy ships bombed at Haha Jima in the Bonin Islands, only 600 miles S. of Tokyo.

Photos, Planet News, Keystone

Last Shots Fired in Four-Year Channel Duel





CROSS-CHANNEL SHELLING of the Dover area by the Germans began on August 12, 1940 (see pages 534-535, Vol. 7) and, with our capture of the French ports, ceased in September 1944. A German long-range photograph of Dover (1) taken from a gun emplacement at Calais, shows the harbour entrance (white arrow), a patrol craft (white circle) and its anti-aircraft balloon (black circle).

Scene of a most valiant stand by British troops in 1940, Calais Citadel fell to the 1st Canadian Army on September 28, 1944. During the Canadians' advance, guns of a heavy coastal battery at Dover (4) bombarded German positions.

The garrison of the last fort to hold out at Boulogne surrendered on September 22 : one of the 14-inch guns (2) that were silenced for ever, and its shells in a captured gun-pit (3).

Photos, Canadian Official, Associated Press, Keystone

Editor's Postscript

AUTUMN, the poets have tried to make us believe, should be a "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness," as Keats addressed it in his exquisite Ode. It should have the pensive quality of approaching old age, the quiet serene atmosphere of windless days and clear starry nights. When Collins saw "sallow Autumn" filling its lap with leaves, he did not see those leaves torn off by furious gales or sodden with cold rain: he imagined them floating down through the blue air gently, restfully, to the ground. This year, when weather of that sort would have been immensely helpful to our soldiers and airmen, they have had very little of it. In our island we have been better off than the Continent. After still sunny days we have heard of storms raging in Italy, continuous rain in Holland, roads made scarcely usable by mud in occupied Germany. One exasperated war reporter spoke of the climate in some sector of the front having turned Quisling! Our task has certainly been made more difficult by bad weather and the war in consequence prolonged. A cynical acquaintance of mine says it became markedly worse just after the last Day of National Prayer.

THE announcement the other day that in order to clear off arrears of work the House of Commons would sit till eight o'clock in the evening sounded strange in the ears of one who all his life has been accustomed to the House sitting till eleven or so, and sometimes very much later. It is strange also to hear in the one o'clock News Bulletin that some statement or other was "made in the House of Commons this morning." Not for a very long time, before this war caused its habits to be altered, had Parliament met until the afternoon. This was mainly for the convenience of business men and barristers, but also in order to let Ministers spend the morning in their offices. But for the past forty years at least the business of the House has increased so much that it has suffered from this sacrifice of the best part of the day, the part when minds are at their freshest and energies unimpaired. I hope the new hours will remain. I should like to be able to hope, too, that something will be done to make M.P.s attend to their duties. It seemed to me disgraceful that the House should be obliged to adjourn on a day when important work waited to be done because only a handful of members were on the benches. Very few can have been in the place at all, for when the signal was given that a "count" was to be taken hardly any entered the Chamber. It is unfair to canvass our votes for a job that is so poorly performed.

OF all the contributions now being made to the World-after-the War discussion, that of J. B. Priestley in his play They Came to a City must rank high. It has now been made into a film, and this is even more effective than the story was on the stage. Or should I say the conversation rather than the story, for there really is no plot and all the characters do is to talk. But it is stimulating, lively talk, and the screen by shifting their background constantly takes off the effect of monotony and makes it seem as if things were happening. The acting is all good, though not much is required of the cast beyond portraying types, a baronet of the Blimp family, a dyed-in-the-wool business man, a bank clerk afraid to "follow his star," a faded aristocratic dowager, and so on. But there is one vivid and pathetic human study—that of an old charwoman with aches all over from her life of toil, but a heart as young as a girl's. I wondered who could be playing that part, and when the names were screened at the end I was both interested and delighted to see that of Miss Ada Reeve, whom I remember so well as a musical comedy star long ago. She sang wittily, danced like a feather in the wind, and turned somersaults so deftly that the gallery boys used to shout "Over, Ada!" She gives in this film a lovely performance.

IN a previous Postscript I spoke of the number of places in war news which are familiar to British holiday-makers in France. The Italian front reminds us of many towns and rivers known to us in literature. Rimini brings recollection not only of the ill-fated Francesca, who with Paolo was found by Dante in his Inferno, but of W. S. Gilbert, too, for into Patience he introduced the lines:

> Francesca da Rimini
> Niminy-piminy
> Foot-in-the-grave young man

to ridicule the aesthetic type of 60 years ago. The Rubicon everyone seems to have some knowledge of, because it has passed into a phrase frequently used—"crossing the Rubicon," meaning to start irrevocably on some adventure, as Julius Caesar did when he took his army across it to attack Pompey and made his bid for the mastership of the Roman world. The river Po comes into both literature and history with equal prominence. Bologna figures largely in Vasari's Lives of the Italian early painters because so many of them took part in founding the school of painting called after that city. Ravenna calls up memories of Byron as well as Dante, who was buried there. As for Venice, not much farther on, it simply teems with associations.

LIEUT.-GEN. WILLIAM H. SIMPSON commands the U.S. Ninth Army in France. He served with the American Expeditionary Force in 1918 as chief of staff of the 33rd Division. PAGE 383 *Photo, U.S. Official*

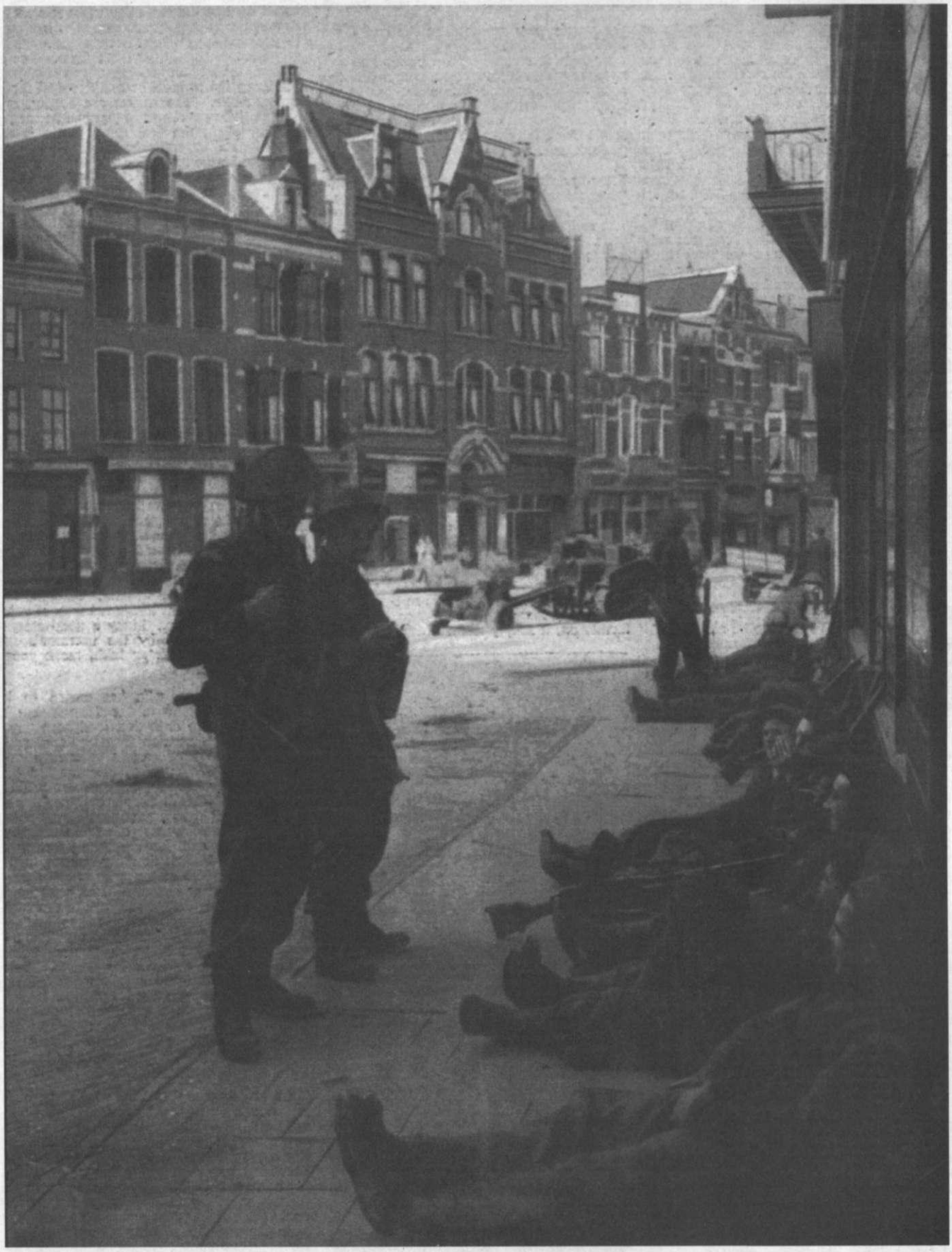
NOT long ago there was a "problem" connected with worn-out safety razor blades—blades that were no good any more. How could they be disposed of? Where could they be thrown away without creating danger for anybody? A man who has been fighting in the jungles of Burma tells me there was a keen demand for them there. One of the worst misfortunes that can befall a soldier in the tropical or semi-tropical forest is snake-bite. The snakes are deadly, and though there are remedies that can be carried in your pack, the best thing to do is cut away immediately the flesh which has been poisoned by the bite. For this purpose safety razor blades are the very thing. "Every man who could get one wore it in his hat," the man from Burma told me. "They were precious out there, I can tell you." Surely a most unexpected solution of the razor-blade problem!

SEVERAL parents I know who sent their small children to the United States while the bombing of Britain was at its worst are worried about their probable return with an American accent. One child I am acquainted with who went to Canada, and is back already, was heard the other day calling out, "Motherr, wherre arre my sneakerrs?" His mother had to be told that "sneaker" is American for the rubber-soled shoes which we used to call sand-shoes. But an accent quickly picked up is dropped with equal quickness. An American lady belonging to the English-speaking Union says the children "lost their English accent in six months" and will no doubt recover it in about the same space of time. Even if they retained a little of their Transatlantic pronunciation it would do them no harm and might make their speech more racy and flavoursome than that of persons who have never been out of this island. Half the fun of American humour lies in the tone of voice in which it is made. Many a good story I have heard spoiled by the narrator's flat English (not Scottish or Irish, mark you!) mode of speech.

I SEE Dean Inge, who has ceased to be officially a pillar of the Church, but is still (as a bishop once described him) "two columns in the London Evening Standard," decries the use of certain American and Canadian words such as elevator for lift, suspenders for braces, back of for behind, and so on. This is simply antiquated prejudice. It might be argued that elevator and suspenders are words of Latin descent, while braces and lift are Anglo-Saxon in their origin. That is doubtful anyway in the case of lift, which seems to have come from the same root as elevator. But, whether it did or not, it is absurd to speak of the latter term as "an Americanism to be avoided like the plague." This is the kind of "piking," as Americans call it, which creates ill-will. It is insular in an irritating degree. Such an attitude of mind reminds me of the schoolboy who remarked that the French instead of saying Yes said Oui and the Germans Ja and the Italians Si and the Russians Da. "We alone get it right," he ended complacently. Was that schoolboy Dean Inge in his youth?

THE military mind has long been a puzzle to students of psychology. The ecclesiastical mind often bewilders those who pay attention to the utterances of bishops. For example, the Bishop of Rochester (Dr. Chavasse) has been saying in his diocesan journal that the German leaders and all who have been guilty of criminal acts must be punished, but he prays we may be delivered from the dreadful and hurtful role of being their executioners. His hope is that the German people will themselves play that role. Surely it is sufficiently obvious that from all points of view it would be better if Hitler and the rest were eventually killed by their own countrymen.

Rest from Battle in Nijmegen on the Waal



BRITISH 2nd ARMY INFANTRYMEN rested awhile in this ancient Dutch town from which the surprised German garrison had been routed in prolonged and bitter fighting. Airborne troops and tanks co-operated in chasing the enemy from house to house and street to street, the operation ending in its capture and the securing of the vital Nijmegen bridge—the biggest single objective of the airborne invasion. The town's pre-war population was close on 100,000. See pages 325 and 368-369.

Photo, British Official

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